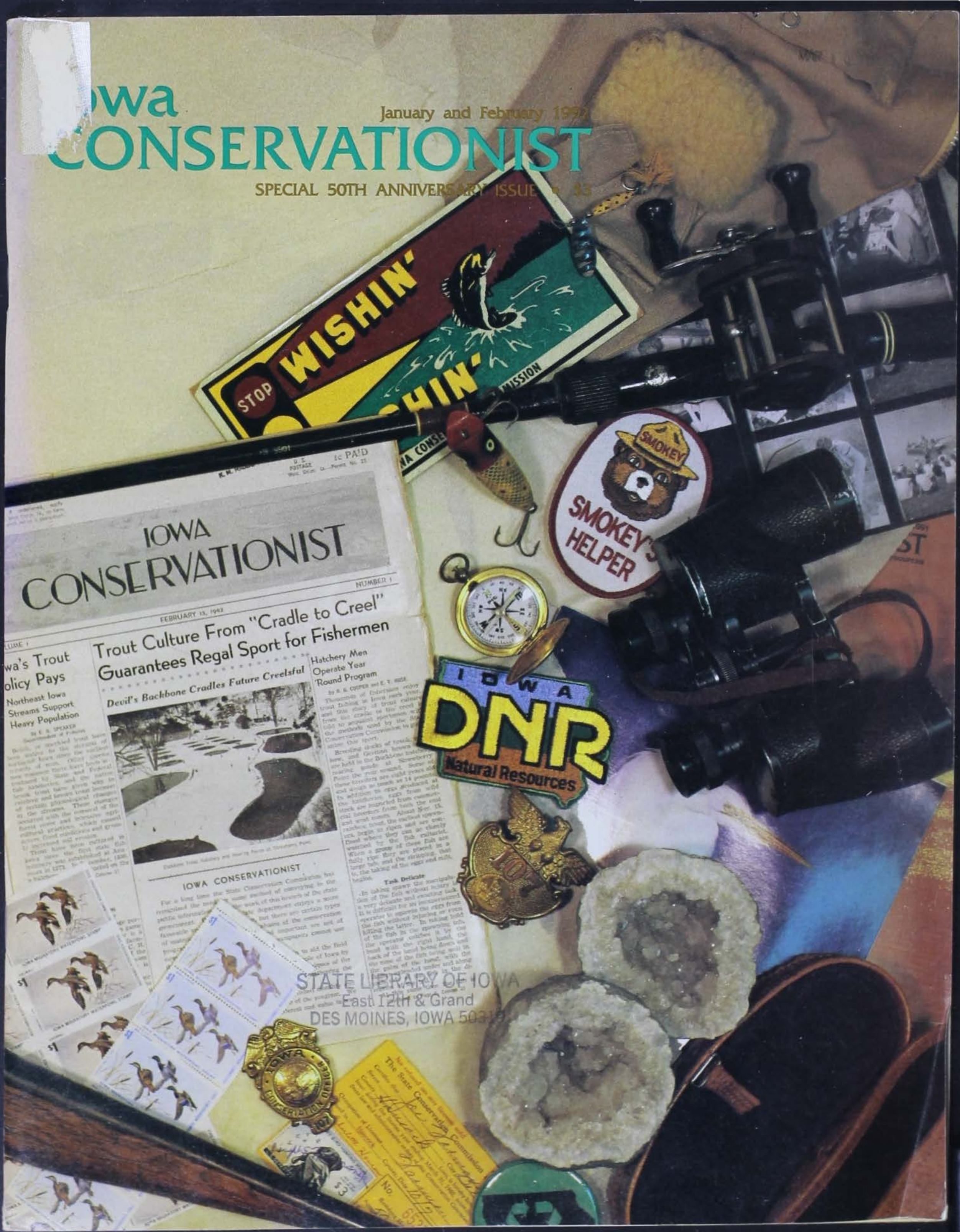
Iowa CONSERVATIONIST

January and February 1992

SPECIAL 50TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE • $3



SPECIAL 50TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE
1942-1992

Iowa CONSERVATIONIST

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VOLUME 51, NUMBER 1

THIS ISSUE

COVER AND DECADE DIVIDER PAGES:
Photos by Ken Formanek.

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To Our Readers:

The *Iowa Conservationist* was born on February 15, 1942, to a young state agency known as the Iowa Conservation Commission. It began as an 8-page black and white monthly, edited by Jim Harlan.

Over the years the magazine has gone through many changes in staff, circulation and subscription rates, but it wasn't until the 1970s and 1980s that the *Iowa Conservationist* experienced real physical change. In addition to the evolution of the magazine's "look," came the merger of the Iowa Conservation Commission in 1986, with the Department of Water, Air and Waste Management, the Iowa Geological Survey Bureau and the Energy Policy Council. At that time, the magazine began covering the broader subject matter of its new parent agency — the Department of Natural Resources.


IOWA
CONSERVATIONIST
Iowa's Trout Policy Pays
Trout Culture From "Cradle to Creel" Guarantees Regal Sport for Fishermen
Devil's Backbone Cradles Future Creelsful
Hatchery Men Operate Year Round Program
Game Farm Active in Winter
JOWA CONSERVATIONIST

It is difficult to adequately represent 50 years of history in 64 pages. However, we have attempted to piece together the story of the *Iowa Conservationist* and the issues and stories it published with brief selections from the magazine. Outside of minor changes indicated in brackets, the articles appear, in-part or in-whole, exactly as they ran in the magazine -- the language of the era intact.

Throughout the years the *Iowa Conservationist* has been fortunate to have a loyal group of followers — many long-time subscribers. This issue is especially for you — those who have seen us through the years. And for our newcomers — here is where we've been.

Here's to 50 years of conservation in Iowa, to the faithful readers of the *Iowa Conservationist* . . . and to 50 more years to come.

--*the staff of the* Iowa Conservationist


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Management
College at Ames
Teach Fish
GAM
MANAGE
AREA
SEE FARM
FOR HUNTING—TRAP
STATE
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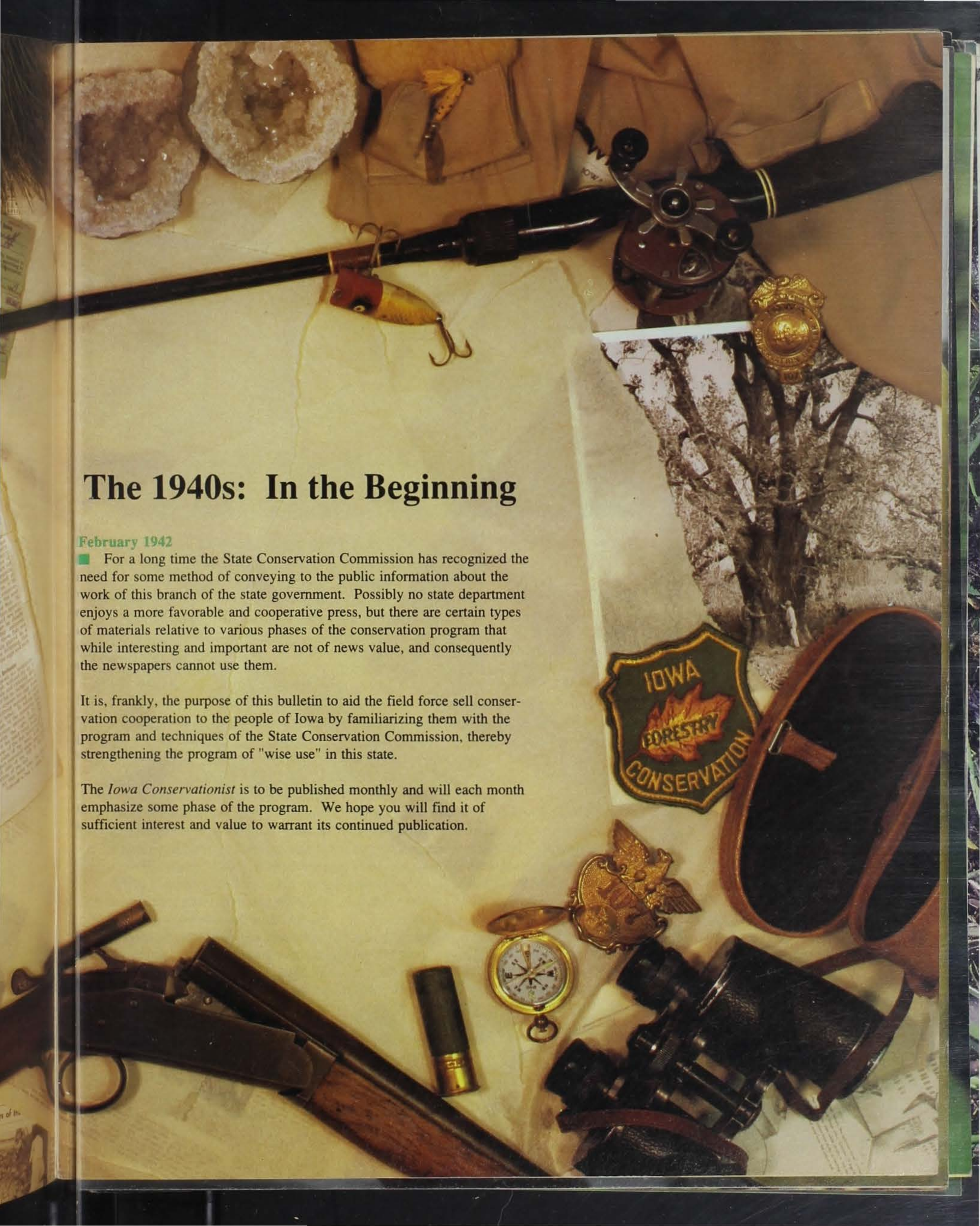


The 1940s: In the Beginning

February 1942

For a long time the State Conservation Commission has recognized the need for some method of conveying to the public information about the work of this branch of the state government. Possibly no state department enjoys a more favorable and cooperative press, but there are certain types of materials relative to various phases of the conservation program that while interesting and important are not of news value, and consequently the newspapers cannot use them.

It is, frankly, the purpose of this bulletin to aid the field force sell conservation cooperation to the people of Iowa by familiarizing them with the program and techniques of the State Conservation Commission, thereby strengthening the program of "wise use" in this state.

The *Iowa Conservationist* is to be published monthly and will each month emphasize some phase of the program. We hope you will find it of sufficient interest and value to warrant its continued publication.

1942


IOWA
CONSERVATIONIST

Iowa's Trout Policy Pays

Trout Culture From "Cradle to Creel" Guarantees Regal Sport for Fishermen

The first issue of *Iowa Conservationist* is published February 1942. It features a nameplate designed by Maynard Reece. The commission receives a "flood of requests for this [eight-page, black and white] monthly bulletin." Copies are free.

Fred T. Schwob is appointed Conservation Commission director.

Plum Grove, home of Robert Lucas, Iowa's first territorial governor, is acquired by purchase and gift. Due to the national emergency, restoration of this building will not be made until after the war.

Opening dates of fishing season include May 15 for northern pike; June 15 for largemouth and smallmouth bass, warmouth bass, rock bass, sunfish, bluegill and crappie; and May 12 for minnow and frog. The catfish season in the inland streams closes May 30 at midnight and reopens July 1.

1942 marks the final year for the Civillian Conservation Corps.

Black walnut brings the

March 1942

Game Farm Program to Continue in Spite of War

. . . The State Game Farm [at Boone] was established to supply seed stocks of pheasants and quail where suitable environment is present and seed stock is needed. Especial attention is directed to the fact that the stocking of pheasants or quail on range that already has sufficient seed stock is a waste of time and money, unless additional environment is provided.

In recognition of this fact, cooperators in the 1941 game bird distribution program are urged to do everything possible to improve cover conditions for upland game birds, especially on the areas where they contemplate releasing the birds which they rear . . .

It is our hope to increase and perpetuate all species of wildlife and to increase hunting opportunities in all parts of the state with satisfactory open seasons and bag and possession limits, so that eventually we can provide annually good sport and recreation for each hunter in the particular branch of sport in which he may be especially interested.

-- Taylor W. Huston, superintendent of game

May 1942

Iowa's Clam Industry May See War Boom For Buttons

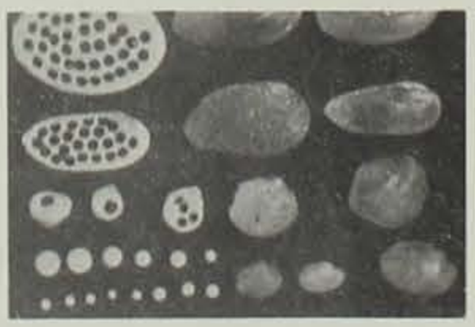
World War II may again boom Iowa's pearl button industry. The demand is here, the organization is here, and so is the labor. But how about the raw material -- clams? Without clams the button industry cannot operate.

Iowa is the leading state in the Union in the manufacture of pearl buttons . . . At one time thousands of Iowans were employed in the collection of clams from the Iowa rivers and streams and many more in the factories processing the shell . . .

Unfortunately clams, like some of our other natural resources, have been over-exploited . . . Concurrently with over-commercialization, two other factors, even more damaging to clam populations than the actual taking of shells, are evident.

One of these factors is siltation . . . Another factor contributing to the reduction in Iowa's clam population, and possibly the most important factor, is stream pollution . . .

--Earl T. Rose, fisheries biologist



Typical Iowa clams, punched shell and blank buttons.

January 1943

Rare Floating Bogs Found in Iowa's Rice Lake

Everyone likes to lie in the grass on a balmy afternoon and watch the clouds drift across the sky before the refreshing breezes of early summer. This is so common that we spend little time thinking about it and merely relax and enjoy ourselves.

But suppose that you were dreaming on a knoll in Rice Lake State Park overlooking the lake and were jolted back to reality by suddenly becoming aware that the shoreline was moving in from across the lake and closing up all the open water that you had been viewing. This is the experience of many of the people who visit Rice Lake State Park, located in Worth and Winnebago counties, and see for the first time the floating bogs.

These bogs are living islands of marsh vegetation and vary in size from small islands a few feet in diameter to as large as 40 acres in area. They drift lazily back and forth before the changing summer breezes or roll and toss angrily at the stormy winds. Bogs of this type are very unusual, and these at Rice Lake are the most important and extensive found in Iowa . . .

--L. F. Tellier, conservation officer

March 1943

There Will Be Boating 'Spite of Rationing,

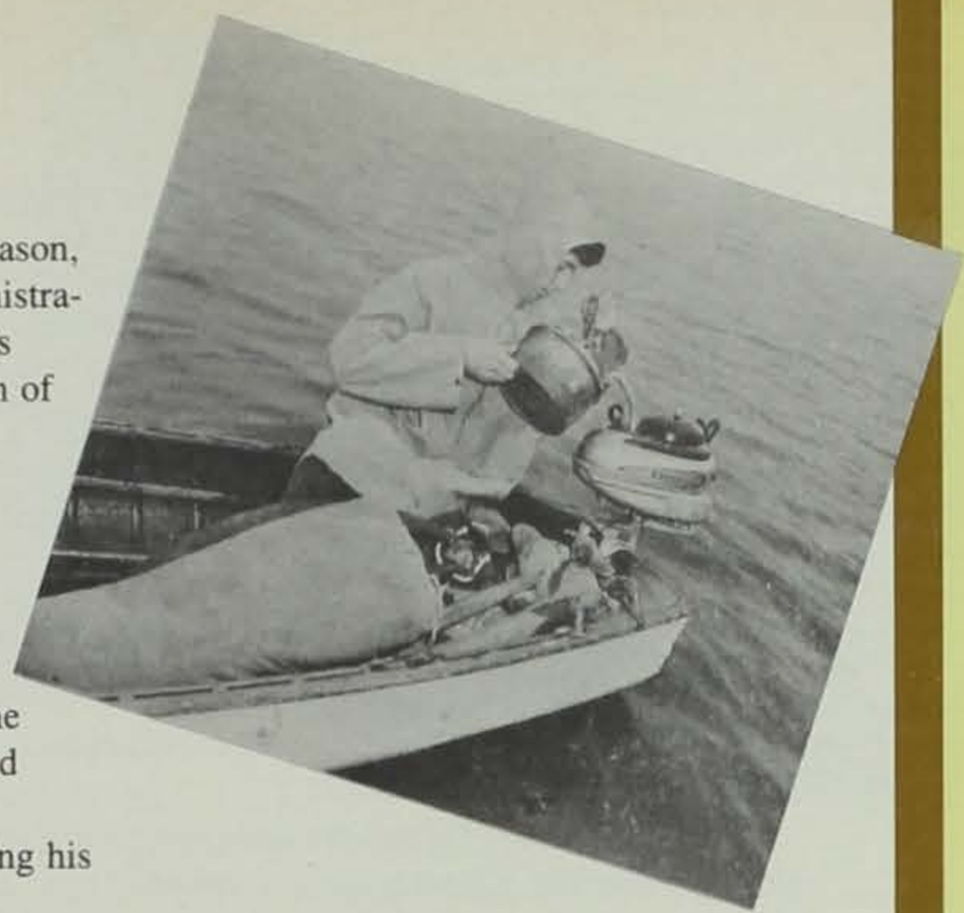
■ With the approach of the boating season, I believe that the Office of Price administration's gas rationing plan for motor boats should be again brought to the attention of the public, because of the interest in boating and fishing by so many Iowans . . .

In rationing gasoline for motor boats, the situation was comparable to that of rationing gas for cars . . .

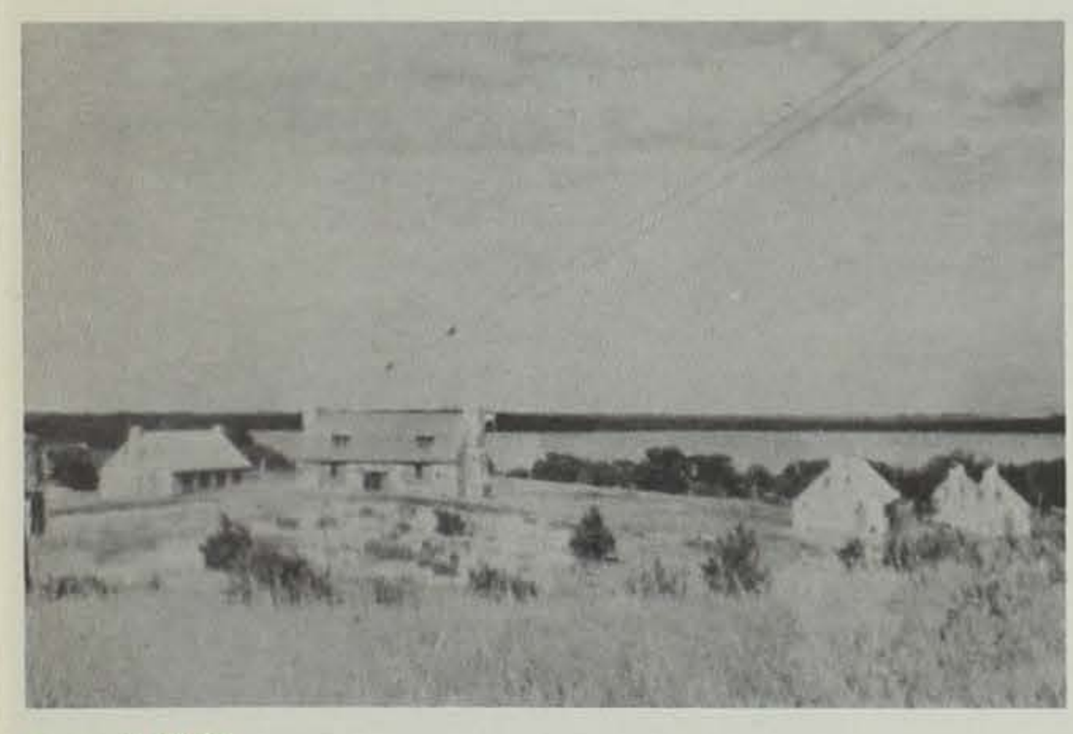
To obtain gas for his motor boat the owner may go to his local war price and rationing board and apply for a "non-highway" ration of gasoline for operating his craft . . .

Boat owners must bend their habits to conform to the new order of things. It is not necessary to be "continually on the go" to enjoy your boat . . .

--Verne H. Petersen, state boat inspector



"Easy on That Gas, It's Rationed"
To obtain gas for his motor boat, the owner may go to his local war price and rationing board and apply for a "non-highway" ration of gasoline for operating his craft.



The Lakeside Laboratory, established in 1909, was deeded to the State of Iowa in 1936 in trust, for the purpose of better insuring the perpetuation and fulfillment of the aims of its founders: "a station for the study and conservation of the water and of the flora and fauna of the State of Iowa."

August 1942

Lakeside Laboratory Provides Setting for Flora, Fauna Study

■ The Iowa Lakeside Laboratory is located on the west shore of West Okoboji Lake adjacent to Miller's Bay . . . The Laboratory was established in 1909 under the leadership of Professor T. H. Macbride, and was the earliest attempt to provide a place where the rich fauna and flora of the northern Iowa lake and prairie regions could be studied and conserved on a non-commercial basis . . .

The laboratory is ideally located in the immediate vicinity of a wide variety of conditions and habitats of interest to the naturalist as well as the biologist. Both deep and shallow lakes are readily accessible; a wealth of both plant and animal life finds a home in the lakes of the region which have a combined area of more than 13,000 acres and more than 80 miles of shoreline. Since the laboratory is especially designed to supply necessary facilities for the investigation of the fauna and flora of the area, a course of intensive study is offered for 10 weeks each summer.

This year the emphasis is being placed upon aquatic biology with special reference to problems of Limnology and Ichthyology. This includes a study of the interrelations existing between aquatic plants and animals and their surroundings . . .

--Dr. Robert L. King, State University of Iowa

highest price of any native timber in Iowa.

Residents of Greene County experiment with three types of artificial den trees to attract raccoons.

The garter snake is the most common snake in Iowa.

"Jim" Crow, a three-year-old community pet of Sioux Rapids and probably the best known bird in the state, dies -- a "victim of an assassin's bullet."

The future control of our natural resources rests with the youth of today. This thought alone should convince our Iowa school authorities of the importance of teaching conservation to boys and girls, so that proper attitudes, applications and knowledges are developed.

--Conservation in School column, February 1942

■ 1943

Iowa Conservationist is available on a subscription basis at 40 cents per year.

Despite a lengthened 1942 fall open season and eight days of spring shooting, with hunters allowed to take two hens, a large breeding stock of ring-necked pheasants remained in northern counties this spring, causing concern for Iowa's corn crop. However, damage to the crop is minimal -- a fraction of one percent.

Number one gamebird in Iowa? It's official -- the

ring-necked pheasant, according to a statewide survey.

Waterfowl in Iowa written by Jack and Mary Musgrove and illustrated by Maynard Reece is published by the commission. It costs $1.


M. E. Stempel

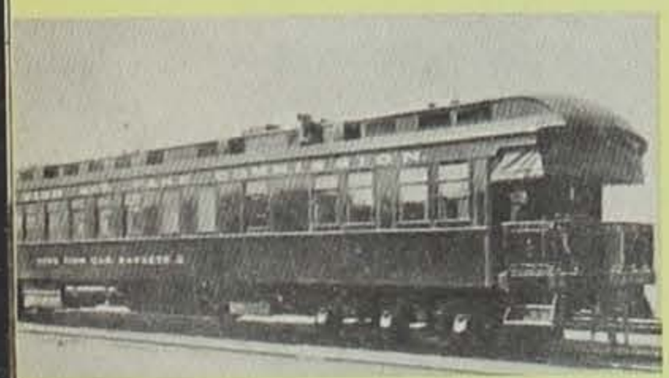
War effort causes shortages in sporting goods industry. Products affected include fishing tackle and lines, guns and ammunition for hunters and outboard motors.

Gardner Sharp cabin, site of the Spirit Lake massacre, is purchased by the State.

■ **1944**

Iowa Conservationist is available for 40 cents per year or $1 for 30 months.

The Hawkeye No. 2, Iowa's famous fish car



built for the State Fish and Game Department in 1913 for the transporta-

December 1944

Poverty or Conservation Your National Problem, Says "Ding,"

■ Any nation is rich so long as its supply of resources is greater than the needs of its people. After that no nation is self-supporting. Somewhere between those two extremeties lies America and its problem of a world free from want.

Since it seems practically decided that America is going to have company for dinner, it might be a good idea to have a look at our pantry shelves and count our food coupons . . .

As long as we in America could pick up the telephone and get anything we wanted delivered to our door for the asking . . . it seemed almost impossible to get the people of the United States to think there was any limit to our natural resources or to take seriously the subject of guarding against rapid depletion. Since we seemed to have plenty of everything why worry about it?

. . . The new emergency put upon our natural resources the greatest burden that had ever been known. That burden will continue until long after the signing of peace. While the war-torn world is healing its wounds a large proportion of the sustenance will continue to come from our continent. That again raises the question of how long we can continue to feed more and more people on less and less productive soil. That we are going to have to feed more and more people is a foregone conclusion. The only other alternative is to materially remedy the "less and less" soil situation by known methods of soil management and the application of scientific conservation principles. Since it is obvious that more and more pople cannot live on less and less, forever and ever, world without end, we should face the problem frankly and either apply conservation seriously or resign ourselves to the inevitable consequences of a greatly lowered standard of living . . .

--Jay N. "Ding" Darling, honorary president, National Wildlife Federation

June 1944

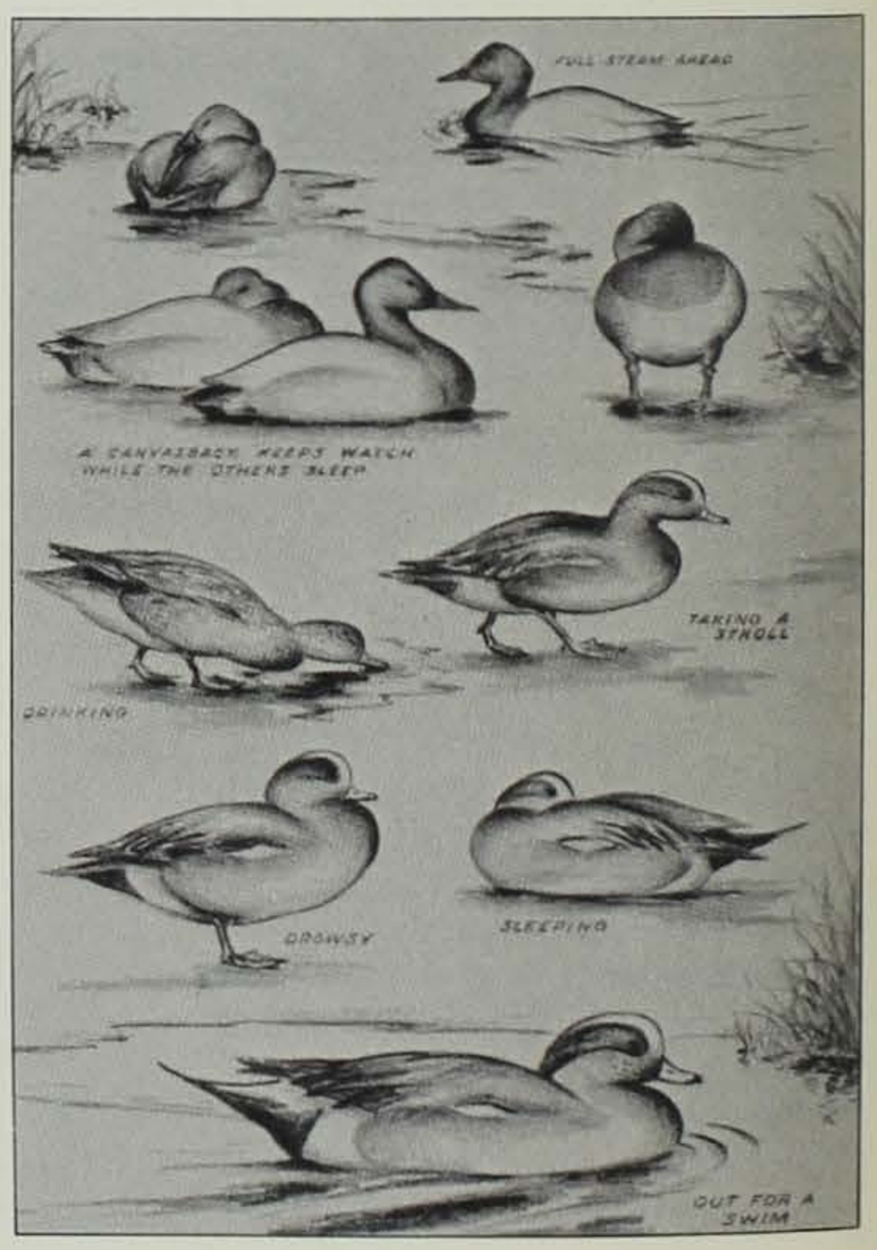
Notes From an Artist's Sketch Book

■ About as near as a hunter need get to a game bird is within range of his favorite firearm. But an artist or photographer must continually strive to get closer and closer, until he can study the number of joints on the bird's toes or just how an eyelid closes . . .

The artist must become intimate with the birds, study their habits, the way they walk, swim, fly and sleep. He finds that each is an individual . . .

In short, the artist's job is to learn his subject well enough to put down on paper not only the subject's general outline and contour, but its emotions and characteristics. He must glamorize them, accentuate their good points and set them in a natural atmosphere.

--Maynard F. Reece, artist, State Historical Building



August 1946

Why the State Fair Fish and Game Exhibit

■ A new era has dawned in conservation. Through the mists the horizon is broadening. Finally, and yet incompletely, we glimpse the entire picture, the interdependence of each phase of conservation upon every other.

We have reached the transition period. Conservation is beginning to and must supplant exploitation. The men who felled the forests, cultivated the earth, spanned the rivers with bridges of steel, built the railways and canals, the great ships and locomotives, have been able to do so only because of the bounty of our resources. Our pioneers were exploiters of our natural resources because it was expedient for them. We must be conservationists because it is expedient for us.

The conservation of our wildlife is but a single segment in the great conservation movement, yet it goes hand in hand with the conservation of our soil, water and forests. Proper land, timber and water use form the only permanent means by which we can increase and perpetuate wildlife.

The birds and animals and the fishes on exhibit at the state fair serve to interest and amuse many people, but back of all this lies a deeper motive. The display is designed as a sugar-coated pill attracting the attention of the public to the end that the importance of conservation may be impressed upon the consciousness of the people, who in the end determine the rate of progress or retrogression of a state or a nation.

--Bruce F. Stiles, chief, Division of Fish and Game

State Fair Exhibit 25 Years Old
The first permanent exhibit constructed in what is now the fish and game building at the fairgrounds was the beautiful aquarium built in 1921. This was the first attempt at the state fairgrounds to display a fish collection in a modern manner.

February 1946

Power Saws Come to Iowa

■ Two men wearing stagged pants and checkered woolen shirts approach a towering cottonwood tree carrying between them what appears to be a cross between an outboard motor, a washing machine, the front end of a motorcycle, and the remnants of one of Rube Goldberg's zaniest creations. A quick pull on a short rope attached to this contraption and a roar like thunder is heard. What looks like a bicycle chain holding the two ends of the outfit together is, in the matter of a second or so, revolving like mad.

Farm Forester photo

Steadily and easily they hold this revolving chain to the trunk of the tree, where it eats its way through the wood faster than a beaver with 40 hungry children. After perhaps 30 seconds the cry of "Timber-r-r-r" is heard and another giant of the forest crashes to the ground.

This is modern logging in Iowa. The day of the aching back is on the wane. The chain saw -- for that's the name of this machine -- with all its time and muscle-saving glory, has arrived . . ."

--Frank Longwood, farm forester

tion of game fish to stocking points throughout the state, is scrapped. The steel from the car "will be on its way to the war via the scrap route." The car has been "retired" since 1933 at the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery.

Plum Grove undergoes emergency restoration efforts. Final restoration will be completed after the war.

"An Analysis of Mink Predation Upon Muskrats in North-Central United States," a mink study bulletin written by Dr. Paul L. Errington, is available free from Iowa State College at Ames.

To encourage production of domestic rabbits to "swell the nation's meat supply," the Boy Scouts of America offers a merit badge for rearing rabbits.

■ 1945

A new pesticide is released for public use. Its name -- DDT.

■ 1946

G. L. Ziemer is appointed Conservation Commission director.

Plum Grove is dedicated.

■ 1947

Bullhead fishing is so hot at Lost Island Lake that the average catch per day per fisherman is 29. The commission takes action to remove the catch and possession limits of bullheads in Lost Island.

A law is passed giving the commission authority to set size limits on fish. Previously this was done by the Legislature.

■ **1948**

This year's Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp is designed by Maynard F. Reece. It features bufflehead ducks.

A full-scale study on lead poisoning of waterfowl begins at the field laboratory of the Illinois Natural History Survey.

The Conservation Commission disagrees with Iowa State College that all roadsides should be sprayed with 2,4-D to get rid of weeds.

Rural mail carriers begin counting wildlife while on their mail routes. The counts are taken during four periods each year -- summer, winter, spring and fall.

Jim Sherman

■ **1949**

The Dingell Bill, fisheries' answer to the Pittman-Robertson Act, is vetoed by President Truman.

An open beaver season in Iowa is held for the first time in 75 years.

Prehistoric Indian mounds

April 1947

Conservation Can't Wait

■ There was a story a few years ago about a man living out on Long Island who sent his new barometer back to the factory for repairs because the needle kept pointing to "hurricane."

A few hours later a hurricane swept his house away and went on to wreck the Atlantic seaboard as far north as Maine . . .

Diminishing wildlife is only the premonitory breeze of a rapidly approaching hurricane of depleted natural resources all along the line . . .

Wildlife merely leads the parade. Even if you are not interested in birds and fish and little Johnnie Skunk, you'd better stick around and watch the rest of the procession. A lot of your more intimate friends are just around the corner.

Two world wars, in which we oiled, munitioned and fed half the world, have taken a heavy toll of our iron, oils, forests and soils, already badly wasted in a reckless era by a nation of economic spend-thrifts.

We have seen the bottom of the barrel too often recently for it to soon be forgotten . . .

Those silt-laden rivers we see running down to the sea may look like nothing but muddy water to you, buy they are beefsteak and potatoes, roast duck, ham and eggs and bread and butter with jam on it.

For there, with the aid of improvident agricultural methods, goes the rich top soil from American farms at the rate of 25 million acres a year. Some groceries!

We have been whittling up our forests faster than we have grown them for a hundred years without counting the extra drain of wars . . .

Wasteful methods of harvesting timber could be remedied where they exist, but aren't . . .

Water resources for industrial purposes, water for agriculture, water for municipalities and water for fish and wildlife have been so polluted, drained, dammed and mismanaged that the sub-soil water table has fallen drastically over most of the continent and we are authorizing billions for control of man-made floods.

All these things and more, including dust bowls and over-grazed cattle ranges are closely associated with and following close behind the vanishing wildlife of our continent. Those who are placing special emphasis on wildlife do so with full recognition that any attempt to restore fish to our waters and wildlife to our uplands without more intelligent management of our soils and waters and without wise application of sound practices to forest and vegetation would be impossible.

They are as interdependent as the wheels in a watch. No one of them can operate without the cooperation of the others.

About the only difference between wildlife and the rest of our natural resources is the fact that the ducks and geese and fish and furbearers have been counted and found wanting. Thus far this nation has never taken an inventory of its stock of supplies.

How much iron, zinc, nickel, lead and aluminum have we and how long will they last?

How many people can be fed on the products of the remaining tillable soil?

How much lumber for houses and ships?

. . . Any nation can be rich only as long as its supply of resources is greater than the needs of its people. After that no nation is self supporting.

It is high time we snapped out of our delusion that the people of this country can go on forever using up soils, forests, waters, minerals and wildlife without eventually coming to the bottom of the barrel.

--Jay N. "Ding" Darling, honorary president, National Wildlife Federation

July 1949

DDT, 2,4-D VS. Wildlife

■ Conservationists throughout the nation are beginning to wonder just what effect use of the new weed-killing chemicals will have upon the future of upland game birds and mammals.

Research work conducted by the federal government has already determined that the use of DDT in high percentages can be very damaging to bird life and beneficial insect life, even though this substance is almost invaluable to agriculture. Now there is another element over which to ponder, the use of 2,4-D and allied chemicals . . .

--Davenport Democrat reprint

March 1947

Heavy Storm Loss to Pheasants

■ The greatest storm toll to pheasants since the Armistice Day blizzard in 1940 has been reported by conservation officers. Storm loss as high as 50 percent in some areas has been reported. Sub-zero temperatues with high winds driving fine snow that collected in ice balls on the birds' nostrils and in their throats causing suffocation has been responsible for the heavy loss . . .

The most devastating storm loss occurred the night of February 4, with subsequent high winds and low temperatures taking additional toll.

In Emmet County officers counted 600 birds dead in a three-hour check. In Sac County 51 dead birds were found in a two-mile fence row check. Additional large losses were reported in many other areas . . .

Although examination of the birds that have been storm killed shows that they were in good condition, continued heavy snows covering available food could weaken the remaining populations to the point that moderate later storms would further reduce the breeding.

Feeding programs by farmers, sportsmen's groups and others interested in wildlife are being carried on extensively and the commission has made available to conservation officers large supplies of grain for bird feed.

November 1949

Experts Say Bounties are Waste of Money

■ After more than 200 years of blood-letting and scalp-collecting, most conservation experts agree that it's a waste of money to set a price on the heads of foxes, coyotes, wolves, crows, mountain lions, weasels, certain hawks and such assorted villains. In fact, there is increasing evidence that most of these are not villains at all, but are beneficial except in isolated cases.

Nevertheless, the bounty system continues -- principally because of two powerful factors: pronounced public opinion, especially among hunters, in favor of bounties; and an unhappy knowledge possessed by conservation officials that some predators sometimes must be controlled somehow, even if the bounty system doesn't seem to be the right method . . .

Bounties apparently do not control predators. However, predators must be controlled at times, and if the bounty system doesn't work, what will?

No one in conservation denies the necessity of controlling predators occasionally in certain areas, but all students of the problem are coming to the conclusion that such control should be the work of men trained to do the job.

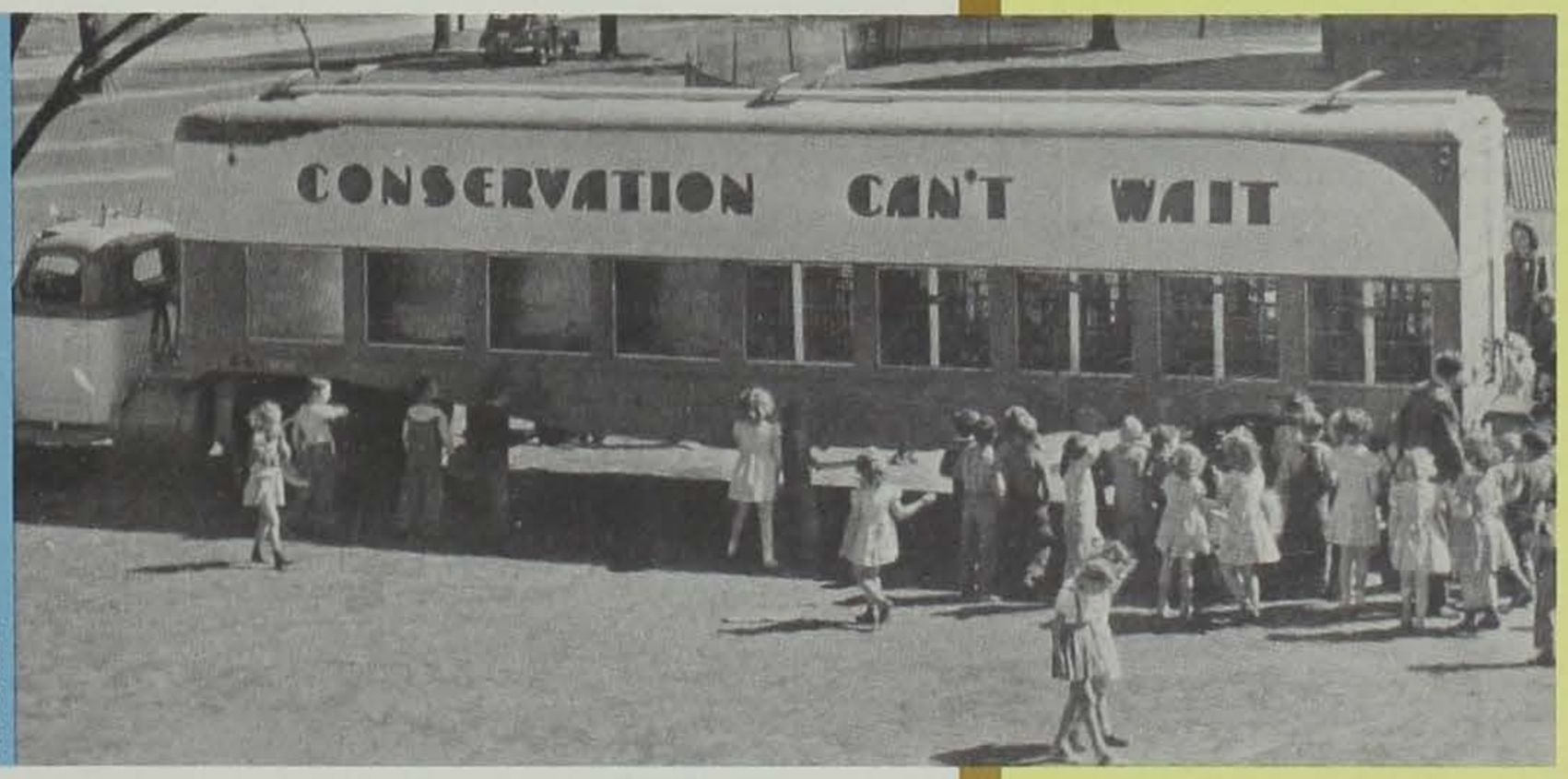
--Hampton Times reprint

in Clayton and Allamakee counties become Iowa 's first national monument. Although Indian artifacts are not abundant in the mounds, in those that have been opened burial pottery, axes and arrow-points have been discovered. The flint fishhook below is one of the most unique specimens.

Female residents over age 16 are now required to purchase a fishing license when fishing in state-owned lakes.

May 1948

■ The Conservation Commission's new mobile Conservation Exhibit finished in 1947, features 10 double pens of live native animals and 10 tanks of native fish. Window panels on sides and end open to show the various species on display. The mobile exhibit is to be used one week in each county, going to two schools each day during the week.



Jim Sherman

The 1950s: Expanding Opportunities

September 1950

Conservation of the nation's resources is still in the infant stage. The major problem to aid in its growth is to get the correct story across to the public.

Another generation is maturing and it is to this generation that the appeal must be made.

They are the ones who must be reached to help save our resources, to build legislative and administrative supports for progress designed to continue and restore the resources. An appeal must be made to their consciences.

The generations that are destined to enter a world of expanding populations, pressuring overtaxed resources, must be prepared for conservation-restoration as one of their basic educational factors . . .

There is much room for pioneering. Unfortunately too much effort has been expended in treating the symptoms of resource waste and abuse, and not enough importance placed on treatment of the cause. The problem of the natural sequence, which is the restoration of renewable resources, has barely been attacked . . .

--*Michael Hudoba, Washington editor,* Sports Afield


IOWA
ERVATIONIS
Number 8
AUGUST 15, 1951
H DAYS—1951
DEER WRECKS CAR
HIGHER FINES FOR ILLEGAL FISHING?
IOWA
PARK
OFFICER
CONSERVATION
Western
SUPER
X
MARK 5
PLASTIC SHOTGUN SHELLS
WARNING Keep out of reach of children
ALL NEW PLASTIC
AMERICA
The State Conservation Commission of Iowa
No. 65367
$3
Chapter IX
CATFISH FAMILY
Ictaluridae
MULTIFLORA ROSE—BIG BEAR BARRIER?

■ **1950**

An unusually large number of snowy owls, whose natural home is in the far North, have been observed in Iowa during the past few weeks. When food becomes scarce in the North, about once every four years, snowy owls in large numbers fly south into the United States in search of food.

Fishing enthusiasts in Iowa will benefit next year under a new law passed by the House and Senate and signed by the President. The measure was sponsored by Rep. John Dingell of Michigan, a democrat. It earmarks existing excise taxes on fishing rods, creels and artificial lures to provide the necessary revenue to carry out federal aid to state programs.

The Weimaraner dog is introduced to Iowa.

The Iowa Conservation Commission purchases an airplane to use in making wildlife surveys and in game law enforcement.

A million and a half multifora rose are planted in Iowa.

July 1950

Women's Fishing Licenses

■ "Women need licenses to fish in state-owned lakes," says a release from the Iowa Conservation Commission. And then they name the 94 lakes in the state that are state-owned.

'Twould avoid a lot of confusion and save a lot of printer's ink if the powers-that-be would just decree "Women must have licenses to fish, period."

It seems discriminatory and a bit on the foolish order to have rules and regulations for the females any different than for the male nimrods. If a femme over 16 years of age wishes to fish, she should shell out the mazuma the same as those of the opposite sex. If a woman WANTS to fish, no dollar and four bits is going to stop her!

So let's stop the confusion and the question-asking and the wasting of ink -- treat the women in the same manner as us men.

--Lake Park News reprint

Jim Sherman

January 1950

Game Violations Pay $24,000 In November

■ Seven hundred fourteen arrests for hunting, fishing and trapping violations during the month of November resulted in fines and sentences totaling $24,188.50 in fines and 875 days in jail . . .

All fines collected for infractions of the fish and game laws are turned over to the treasurer of the county in which the prosecution is made and earmarked for use as county school funds.

July 1951

The World's Oldest Robin

■ A number of [bird]band recoveries have been previously reported in the *Conservationist* but the latest and one of my best is that of Robin No. 36-325736, banded September 15, 1937, at Pomeroy, Iowa, and found dead at Harlan, Iowa (only 65 air miles from Pomeroy), about 10 and a half years later. At the moment this is a world record. No other robin is known to have lived so long.

--M. L. Jones, conservation officer

Development of state-owned game lands for maximum production of pheasants and rabbits is the purpose of game area units. This crew is planting 2,000 multiflora rose seedlings per hour on one of the areas.

With the advent of contour farming, a new fencing problem arose. It is believed that the answer to the problem is multiflora rose.

L.F. Faber

October 1951

Deer Dangerous to Traffic

■ If the deer in Jasper County continue to be traffic hazards on Highway 14 south of Newton, maybe there ought to be an open deer season on the critters. The other night a four-point buck tangled with a car and wound up the loser. The car sustained considerable damage, however. Saturday night's incident was the third such happening in recent months. Why go to Minnesota to hunt deer when they come hunting you in Jasper County.

--Newton News reprint

February 1950

Uniforms for Conservation Personnel

■ Shades of the Northwest Mounted Police. Iowa's conservation officers are going to be all dressed up, and they always have many places to go.

For the first time since 1934 Iowa conservation officers will don snappy new uniforms, complete with insignia. It will be an official dress uniform and is to be worn at all meetings, special occasions, and as may be directed by the Conservation Commission.

The full outfit will consist of a gray-green gabardine Eisenhower dress jacket and garrison cap, tan gabardine trousers, tan poplin shirt, green tie and suitable insignia. Sounds like something that might have been dreamed up by a Dior or an Adrian, with emphasis on the masculine side.

Jim Sherman

Unfortunately, Iowa laws make no provision for picking up the check for the cost of this type of uniform, and it will be considerable. This is to be regretted. We believe that if a state wishes to uniform its officers, it should contribute to the cost of the apparel, especially since it is strictly dress, and not service garb.

We're for the idea. There is nothing nicer than a snappy uniform emplematic of the sovereign power of a great state, and Iowa ia a great state. A conservation officer in uniform will lend dignity to any gathering. Iowa is but following the practice prevalent in many of our Midwestern states. We have seen a lot of these boys and they look mighty nice in uniform.

--Davenport Democrat reprint

July 1950

65 New Birds on U.S. Protected List

■ Sixty-five additional birds . . . appear on the newly revised list of 522 migratory birds protected by federal law, the U.S. Department of the Interior has announced.

. . . the Fish and Wildlife Service now lists the roadrunner of the southwest as a protected bird . . .

Another well-known bird appearing on the list for the first time is the cardinal. While this attractive bird has been protected in many states, other states have permitted its caging as a house pet . . . no action [will be] taken against individuals who obtained their pets prior to issuance of the revised list.

. . . All birds native to Iowa are protected by state law except the European starling, English or house sparrow, blackbird, crow, sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk and great horned owl.

November 1951

Portable Ice Box Saves Game in Hot Weather

■ Very few hunters will bother to go rabbit hunting this early in the season because of the old-timers' rule that rabbits aren't fit to eat until the snow flies. This rule had a certain amount of truth in it in the days before ice boxes -- and other cold storage.

Today a hunter can take a small, portable ice box or a large insulated jug partly filled with ice and dress his game as he gets it. This way the meat will be just as good eating as if he had waited for mid-winter.

--Cedar Rapids Gazette reprint

Dr. Ada Hayden, research assistant professor of botany and plant pathology of Iowa State College, dies. Dr. Hayden was devoted to the preservation of native prairie areas. In her honor, the 160-acre native prairie in Howard County will now be called the Ada Hayden Prairie.

The first case of Dutch elm disease is found in America.

Jim Sherman

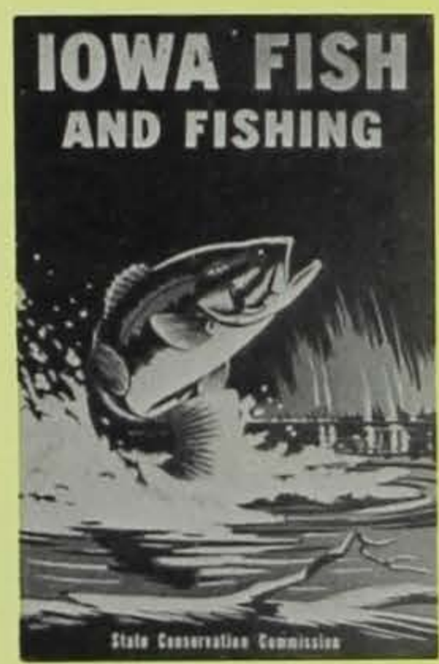
A quarter of a million people visit the Conservation Commission's traveling exhibit. The exhibit is designed to interest school children and other citizens of Iowa in the welfare of native wildlife. At each school, state conservation officers guide groups of pupils past the cages and tanks.

■ 1951

Maynard Reece wins federal duck stamp contest for the second time in four years. The winning design is of gadwalls.

The State Legislature has enacted a bill that permits Iowans to troll from machine propelled boats or sailboats on any inland waters of the state, except that on state-owned

artificial lakes, motor boats larger than five horsepower are to be permitted, and no motor boats are permitted on any state-owned artificial lake of less than 100 acres in size.



The Iowa Conservation Commission has published 10,000 copies of a new book, *Iowa Fish and Fishing*. The 248-page clothbound "fishing Bible for Iowans" is available for $2 per copy. The book is written by James R. Harlan, assistant director of the Conservation Commission and editor of the *Iowa Conservationist*, and E. B. Speaker, superintendent of biology of the commission. Color plates within the book are done by Maynard Reece.

The State Department of Health urges dog owners to vaccinate against rabies.

Ravenous walleyes gladden the hearts of Clear Lake anglers during the first half of the 1951 season. In 34 days, 7,495 walleyes were caught compared to 372 during the same period in 1950.

The first Kids' Fish Days is held. Before the first

March 1950

Conservation School for Teachers

■ Imagine going to school in one of Iowa's most beautiful state parks. That's what a hundred Iowa teachers will do this summer. Their schoolground will be Springbrook State Park, one of central Iowa's favorite playgrounds -- the schoolhouse, God's great outdoors. Sounds good, doesn't it? It is good -- good for the teachers, good for the children, good for you.

Teachers need to know much more about conservation than they can read in books, or see in pictures. Learning to chop wood takes experience with axe and wood. Learning conservation well enough to teach it requires experience, too -- experience with soil, water, plants, animals and minerals. Experience makes clear what words or pictures can never tell.

George W. Worley

With understanding, the bedlam of early morning bird music is translated into a symphony arranged by the Supreme Composer.

The school which will provide teachers with needed experiences in conservation is Iowa's first Teacher's Conservation Camp. Regular college credit will be given, but this will be no ordinary college course. Most classes will be held out-of-doors. Why look at pictures on charts or blackboards when real, live, growing examples are only a few feet away?

Three state agencies are official sponsors of the camp. Iowa State Teachers College, at Cedar Falls, will furnish most of the staff and conduct the camp. The Iowa State Department of Public Instruction will assist with instruction, visual aids, etc. The State Conservation Commission is providing the buildings, utilities, and the park itself . . .

Teachers who attend the camp will have fun as well as work. They may swim, row and fish in the beautiful 27-acre lake. There is a sand beach, bathhouse, concession and lifeguard.

Students of bird life will see and hear birds to their heart's content. Early morning bird hikes will be part of the training course. In the park are woods, grass, water, marsh, streamside and roadside habitats where teachers may study a wide variety of

living things.

Those who prefer cool, quiet, shaded trails and dells to the noise and bright sun of the beach will find their choice at Springbrook. Easy trails are near at hand for the "walker." The "hiker" will find a challenge in more distant undisturbed areas of the mile-square park.

Cool, comfortable sleeping cabins offer rest for tired muscles. Modern facilities, including hot and cold showers, will add to comfort. In the large central dining hall, teachers will find plenty of good food from Iowa farms, prepared by skillful, experienced cooks. Large recreation hall and assembly rooms will be used for study, indoor laboratory work, movies, library, recreation, etc.

Learning should be fun at the conservation camp. Pleasant surroundings are only part of the story. The staff will be trained and experienced in outdoor education and teaching methods. The latest and best visual aids to teaching will be used and demonstrated. There will be a reference library on conservation and nature. Specialists in methods of teaching will point out exactly how teachers may use their new knowledge in their own schools. When desirable, busses will take teachers away from the park to study good and poor use of natural resources . . .

All proud Iowans should thrill to this fact: at last we are going into the fields, woods and waters to train teachers of conservation. Teachers trained out-of-doors will never be content to teach conservation from books alone. They will give pupils experience along with advice. Our boys and girls will profit from this. They will be better prepared to use Iowa's resources wisely and well.

--George W. Worley, education assistant

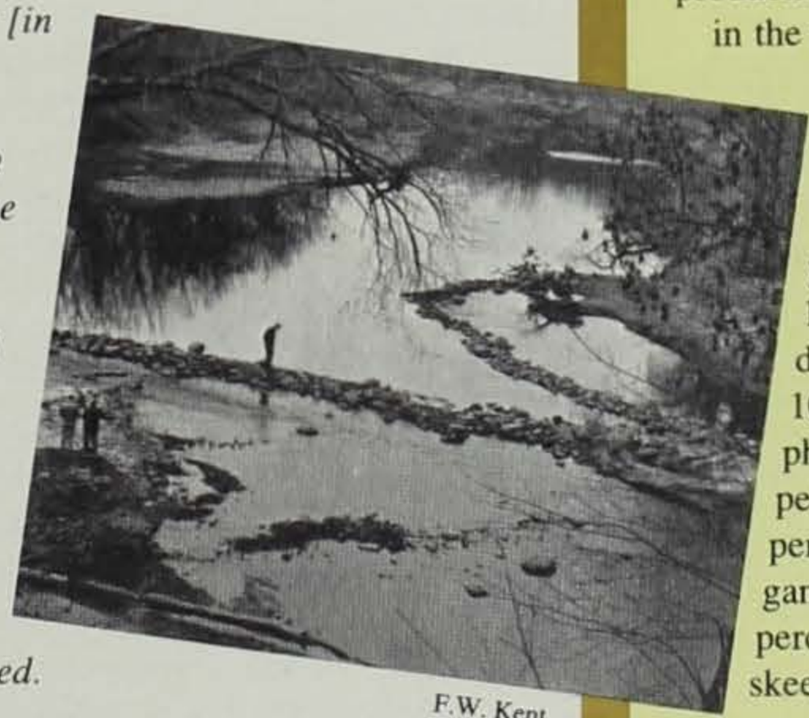
July 1952

Chemical Controls vs. Wildlife

■ Generally, each step forward in economic progress involves a step backward for certain other values. Each advance brings incidental losses, some of which cannot readily be reckoned in dollars and cents. For example, about 1,000 deer are killed by autos every year in Michigan alone. Such losses are impressive but not sufficient to induce a return to the less destructive horse and buggy . . . Instead, we philosophize that progress takes its toll.

Chemicals useful in controlling man's pests belong in this category of mixed blessings. They clearly manifest potentialities for harm as well as for good. Yet, like the auto, their economic value is so great that there can be no doubt that pesticides are here to stay even though some control agents may be replaced. Also, there can be little doubt that some of the unnecessary losses they inflict upon wildlife will continue until greater knowledge and better methods of application are developed. The task at hand is to fit pest control agents wisely into the wildlife picture -- or visa versa . . .

--Clarence Cottam, assistant director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, reprint from DU Quarterly, Spring 1952



Low water [in the fall of 1952] practically exposed the bottom of the Iowa River, and the entire structure of the ancient Indian fish trap was exposed.

F.W. Kent

August 1953

Bounties on Wild Animals

■ The board of supervisors of each county shall allow and pay from the county treasury bounties for wild animals caught and killed within the county as follows:
Each adult wolf -- $10, each wolf (cub) -- $4, each lynx --$ .50, each wildcat -- $ .50, each pocket gopher -- $ .05 and each red or gray fox -- $2.
The board may by resolution adopted and entered on record authorize the payment of bounties as follows:
Each crow -- $ .10, each groundhog -- $ .25, each rattlesnake $ .50 and each European starling $ .05 . . .

school bell rings this fall, 100 kids' fish days will have given more than 30,000 Iowa youngsters a taste of good fishing.

Under a plan inaugurated by the State Conservation Commission in September, walnut lumber will become more abundant on state-owned forests, parks, and wildlife lands. For the next five years a goal of five million plantings has been set.

■ 1952

A 55-pound lower jaw of one of Iowa's native elephants was recently found by Lynn Deal on his farm four miles southwest of Jefferson. The jaw has been identified as that of the hairy mammoth and is excellently preserved.

Annual shotgun shell production is consumed in the following manner: Rabbit -- 29.6 percent, squirrel -- 14 percent, quail -- 13.9 percent, duck and geese -- 10.5 percent, pheasant -- 9.5 percent, doves -- 7 percent, other game -- 3.5 percent, trap and skeet -- 12 percent.

According to federal duck stamp sales for the 1950-51 fiscal year, Iowa's waterfowl hunters totaled 49,518. The hawkeye state ranked 14th in number of duck stamps sold. California,

Minnesota and Texas ranked one, two and three, respectively.

■ 1953

Oscar, the rock sturgeon of the state fair dies -- 53 years old.

For the first time since 1946, an Iowa hunting season is open on Hungarian partridge.

In June, conservation officers report the otter as common in Clayton and Allamakee counties and rare in Dubuque, Jackson, Clinton and Scott counties -- all along the Mississippi River. According to these reports, there were no otters present in any other Iowa counties. The last otters reported along the Missouri River in Iowa were two trapped in 1929 near Smithland in Woodbury County.

First Iowa deer season opens December 10 - 14. Hunting hours are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. License fee is $15 and deer of any sex or age may be taken.

■ 1954

Iowa farmers are urged to use a flushing bar when mowing alfalfa fields -- the hen pheasant's favorite nesting area. Thirty-five percent fewer pheasants are killed by tractors equipped with the bar.

Nearly two million trees, shrubs and roses have been added to Iowa landscapes under the Plant Iowa Program, officially established this year by Governor William S. Beardsley.

January 1954

The 1953 Iowa Deer Season

■ For five days in early December, Iowans watched their first modern deer season with mixed feelings. Some were opposed to any deer season at all, while others wanted a chance at big game hunting and venison roasts.

A month later, shots from the deer season were still being heard. The Conservation Commission was the target of criticism, most of which was leveled against the legal multiple deer kill and the $15 license fee.

To these and some other criticisms, the commission could only answer that it was Iowa's first big game season and that there had been some mistakes. To statements that Iowa's deer had been "slaughtered" and that the Iowa herd had been "wiped out," the commission strongly disagreed. In summary of the deer season, the commission points out that probably fewer deer than the 1953 reproduction were taken during the hunting season. The census taken late last winter indicated roughly 13,000 deer in the state. The increase during the summer is believed to have been as much as 50 percent, or 6,500 animals.

Fine racks were the rule on three- and four-year-old bucks. Sheriff Ray Barber of Jasper County and conservation officer Gene Hlavka examine the rack of a 295-pound buck killed by a car a few days before the season.

Before and during the season, 3,795 licenses were sold. Of these, 3,074 of the attached report cards have been returned by hunters, who reported killing 2,196 deer. Added to this figure is the 769 tags issued to farmers and hunters making multiple kills, bringing the present report to 2,965 animals . . .

Hunter success was extremely high. Nearly three hunters out of four, or 71 percent, killed deer . . .

In some local areas it is believed that as much as 50 percent of the deer were killed, the percentage recommended for herd reduction. These areas were in western and northwestern Iowa where deer were highly vulnerable to hunters. However, the deer were not eliminated, even in the most heavily hunted areas . . .

Iowa's first deer season was regarded by the Conservation Commission as highly successful for several reasons:

First, there were no fatal or non-fatal shooting accidents. No livestock or property damage was reported.

Second, there was a minimum of farmer-sportsman friction . . .

Third, there was high hunting success, and hunting is a part of good conservation. Conservation in its modern meaning is not srtrict preservation, but rather a wise use of our natural resources. All game populations have annual surpluses that should be harvested . . . The present Iowa deer herd is in excellent condition. but no animal species can expand unchecked. There is always a control, whether it is hunting, famine or epidemic.

Checking stations revealed that deer killed were large and in superb physical condition. The biggest buck checked by the commission biologists weighed 271 pounds live weight, and there may have been larger ones unchecked. many bucks weighed well over 200 pounds, and 10-point bucks were not uncommon. There were few patriarchs checked at the stations, and seven and one-half years was the maximum age. The largest deer, both bucks and does, were in the three-and-one-half- to four-and-one-half-year class.

Most hunters found rifled shotgun slugs extremely effective . . .

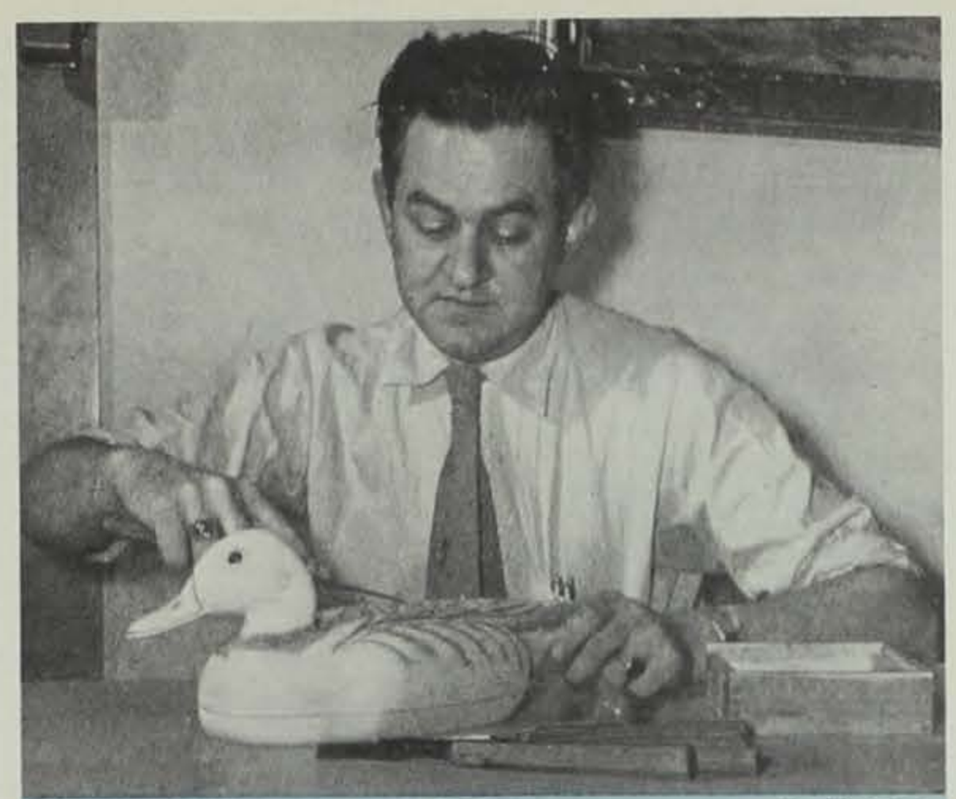
Opinion of the deer season is strongly divided, and always will be. One thing, however, is certain. For years to come, hunters will be talking over the first Iowa deer season.

--John Madson, education assistant

May 1954

Outdoor Shop Talk on TV

■ April 12, 1954, marked a milestone in conservation education as the Iowa Conservation Commission released the first in a series of television programs to every TV station transmitting to Iowa viewers. The 13-week series entitled "Outdoor Shop Talk," produced entirely by commission personnel, is the first of its kind in the nation. Each of the programs is 15 minutes long and consists of a short studio interview followed by a specially prepared telefilm on outdoor Iowa. The spring program series includes an introduction to the series, the spring goose flight, the traveling exhibit, trout hatcheries, conservation school, the game warden, the man in the park, stream fishing, lake fishing, state park system, water safety, kids' fish days, and conclusion to series . . .



Jim Sherman

January 1955

Making Champion Decoys

■ . . . If decoys get any better than Jack Musgrove's [curator of the State Historical Building], they should be banned by law, for Musgrove's blocks have everything but the quack.
These decoys may frighten some home craftsmen, but they aren't as difficult as they look . . .

Sculpted decoys take time and patience, but aren't out of reach of the average workman with sharp tools. As Musgrove says, the decoy is there all the time. All you have to do is to cut away the excess wood!

--John Madson

July 1954

There's Nothing Really New

■ Although split bamboo fishing rods are being largely replaced by the new fiberglass rods, the two types have much in common.

Glass rods are made of fine glass fibers that are insulated from each other with special resins applied under great heat and pressure. The basic material -- glass -- is composed of silica and is manufactured from sand.

Bamboo that is used in split bamboo rods must be extremely tough and is manufactured from the "rind" or outer layer of selected bamboo stalks. Bamboo growing on the sandy hillsides of Tonkin Province in China has been considered as the finest variety for rods because its rind has a very high content of a substance called lignin. This lignin contains a silica compound that is really a type of natural glass.

March 1956

Atomic Research Takes to the Woods

■ Use of atomic energy is expanding faster than the average person can scan headlines. It has already entered a bewildering number of sciences: military, naval, medical, biological and industrial. It was only a matter of time until it entered Iowa forests.

Within the past year, an amazing device has appeared in the laboratories of Iowa State College . . .

The little device can be strapped to the side of a tree and a photographic film within a pliabe holder is mounted on the opposite side of a trunk. X-rays of the trunk can be taken and decay or injury located without cutting down the tree . . .

--John Madson, editor/education assistant

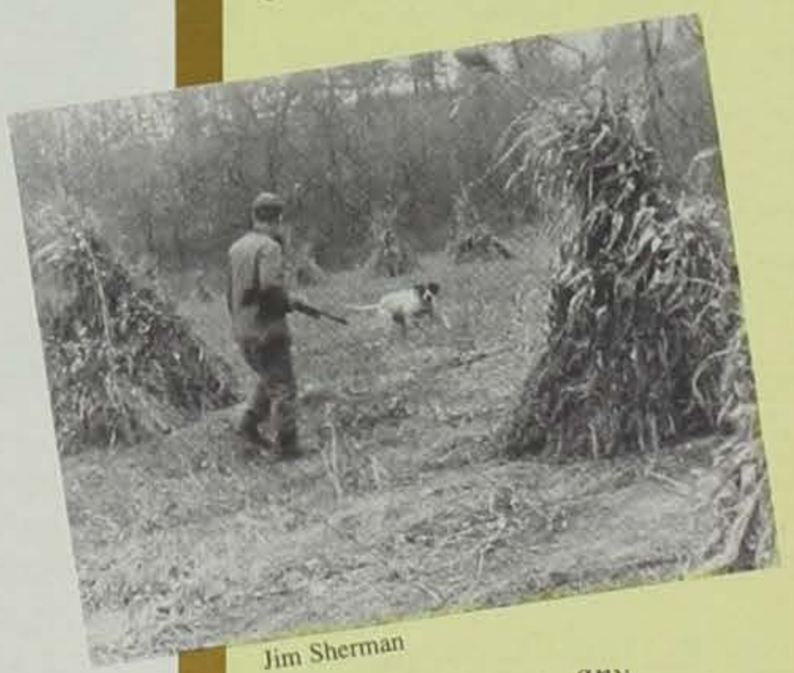
■ 1955

Gun hunters will have a three-day deer season this year, and for the first time in modern history in Iowa deer may be hunted in every Iowa county. Two seasons have scattered the Iowa herd, opening up many new areas for hunting.

First Tree Farms are certified in Iowa -- six totaling 449 acres.

■ 1956

[Approved in May, the Soil Bank Act] provides action to "protect and increase farm income, to protect the national soil, water, forest, and wildlife resources from waste and depletion . . ."
If widely accepted, the program can affect Iowa's farm economy and out outdoor sports profoundly. It will not mean an immediate facelifting for Iowa or



Jim Sherman

any other state. But it's a beginning, and a hopeful sign that at last we may be learning to live in harmony with our land.
--"The Soil Bank and Wildlife," *by John Madson, editor, August 1956*

New Iowa fish documented -- the pugnosed shiner minnow is found in West Okoboji.

Two northern Iowa marshes are seeded with rice to attract and hold waterfowl.

Iowa draws nearly six million visitors to its parks during 1956 to place it ninth in the nation in park attendance, according to a report of State Park Statistics for 1956 by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of Interior.

■ **1957**

Park use record is broken. Iowa now ranks fifth in the nation with 6.5 million visitors in 1957.

Iowa enacts a law allowing the establishment of shooting preserves.

Beginning July 4 , women anglers of the state over 16 years of age must have a fishing license to fish any of Iowa's waters.

A law providing for county conservation boards goes into effect.

Farmers build 2,181 farm ponds, bringing the total number of farm ponds to 14,209.

■ **1958**

Work is underway to partially reconstruct Fort Atkinson in Winneshiek County, before time and decay damage it further. A total of $45,000 has been appropriated for the present work. The fort cost $95,000 to build in 1840.

June 1955

New Lakes Have Big Opening

■ For a time it looked as if all of central Iowa was spending its Memorial Day at Rock Creek Lake near Newton and Green Valley Lake at Creston. The two new artificial lakes were opened for fishing at 5 o'clock on a foggy May 30 morning, and hundreds of eager fishermen were on hand. Not many of them were sorry.

From the lakes' opening until 10:30 that night, nearly everyone caught fish. Pat Tilley, conservation officer at Creston, tells about Green Valley:

"It was misty at 5 o'clock and several hundred fishermen were at the docks ready to go. They had just started out on the lake and one fisherman who was pulling away from the dock tossed a plug overboard to begin trolling. Right away he caught a two-pound bass. Then you should have heard those outboards . . .

It was the same thing at Rock Creek Lake . . . One man at the north end of the lake took seven legal bass in eight casts . . .

The kids around Rock Creek Lake had the time of their lives. Some were using artificial baits for the first time and shattered the old "bent-pin and worm" tradition by hanging up some fine, fighting bass with spinning gear and casting rods. Many were catching their first largemouths and carried them around proudly and held them up at the slightest excuse, bless 'em. It was a good day all around; one of those rare days when every angler is an expert -- and can prove it . . .

But whatever happens tomorrow, it's certain that a lot of anglers went home happy on May 30. The opening day at Rock Creek Lake and Green Valley Lake was a splashing success, and gave thousands of fishermen a Memorial Day to remember.

--John Madson, editor/ education assistant

Thousands of fishermen visited Rock Creek Lake, and most of them were happy. It was a Memorial Day to remember, when everyone was a fishing expert -- and could prove it.

February 1957

More on Iowa Mountain Lions

■ During early January, Iowa's famed panthers again prowled through the columns of hawkeye newspapers.

A Des Moines resident had sighted a "black panther" in his backyard that had frightened his tabby out of eight of its nine lives.

A few weeks earlier in the soft earth of a cornfield near Lamoni, hunters found a giant pawprint of what they believed to be a mountain lion, and even made a plaster cast of the big pug mark.

The plaster cast of the Lamoni Lion's spoor was sent to the Conservation Commission in Des Moines, and another colorful report perished.

It was a big print, roughly the size of the coffee can lid on which it was mounted. About five inches wide and almost that long, the cast plainly showed clawmarks. It was obviously the print of a large dog . . .

--John Madson, editor

July 1958

Fish and Insecticides

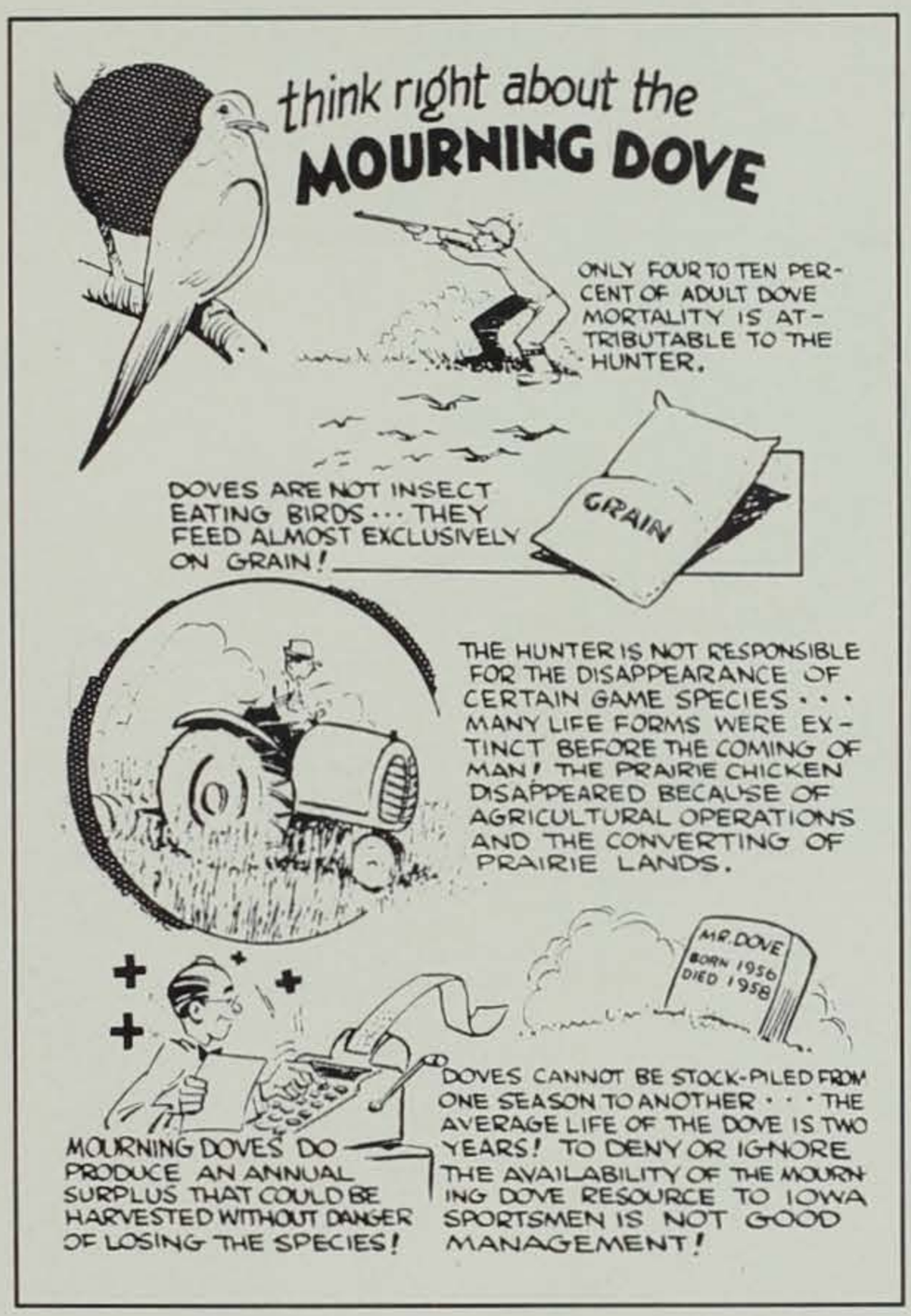
■ With the development today of an increasing number of insecticides and the use of more potent insecticides, there exists real and potential dangers to many forms of wildlife for which these chemicals are not intended. DDT was the first of these insecticides to be used, and it is still the most popular and widely used. Widespread application of DDT on agricultural lands, forests, marshes and waters has quickly aroused the interest of persons and agencies who are concerned with the ways in which it might directly or indirectly affect animals other than insects.

. . . One hundred percent kills of trout were noted within three hours when dieldrin and toxaphene were applied at a rate of 0.1 parts per million in water. DDT and heptachlor killed only 50 percent of the fish within 24 hours when applied at the same rate . . .

--Jim Mayhew, fisheries biologist

August 1958

Some Comments On: The Mourning Dove Proposal



July 1959

Iowa -- A Quarter Century From Now

■ In the year 1984 the effects of applied conservation principles could be readily apparent to everyone. Will Iowa still be an agricultural state with only the land best suited to the raising of crops being used? Will tall timber cover many acres unsuited to other crops? Will sloughs contain an abundance of wildlife? Will there be many more lakes? Will our streams be no longer used as sewers, but be running bright and clear, free of all pollution?

Will the population be greatly increased but the crime and delinquency rate be lower, and the average man be a better person because of a tendency to apply conservation principles to the daily life of the individual?

The value of the dollar will be changed, perhaps not too greatly altered in mathematical terms, but will it be altered rather in the concept of human value, for while happiness cannot be directly purchased the wise use of the dollar can bring about conditions favorable to happiness.

If conservation principles continue to be improved and consistently applied, man and nature will live in closer harmony and Iowa 25 years from now will still be a better place to live.

--George E. Tovey, commission photographer

■ **1959**

Iowa Conservationist's rates change to $1 for two years.

Glen G. Powers is appointed director of the Conservation Commission, after the death of Bruce F. Stiles.

Otters are added to the State Fair exhibit.

Jim Sherman

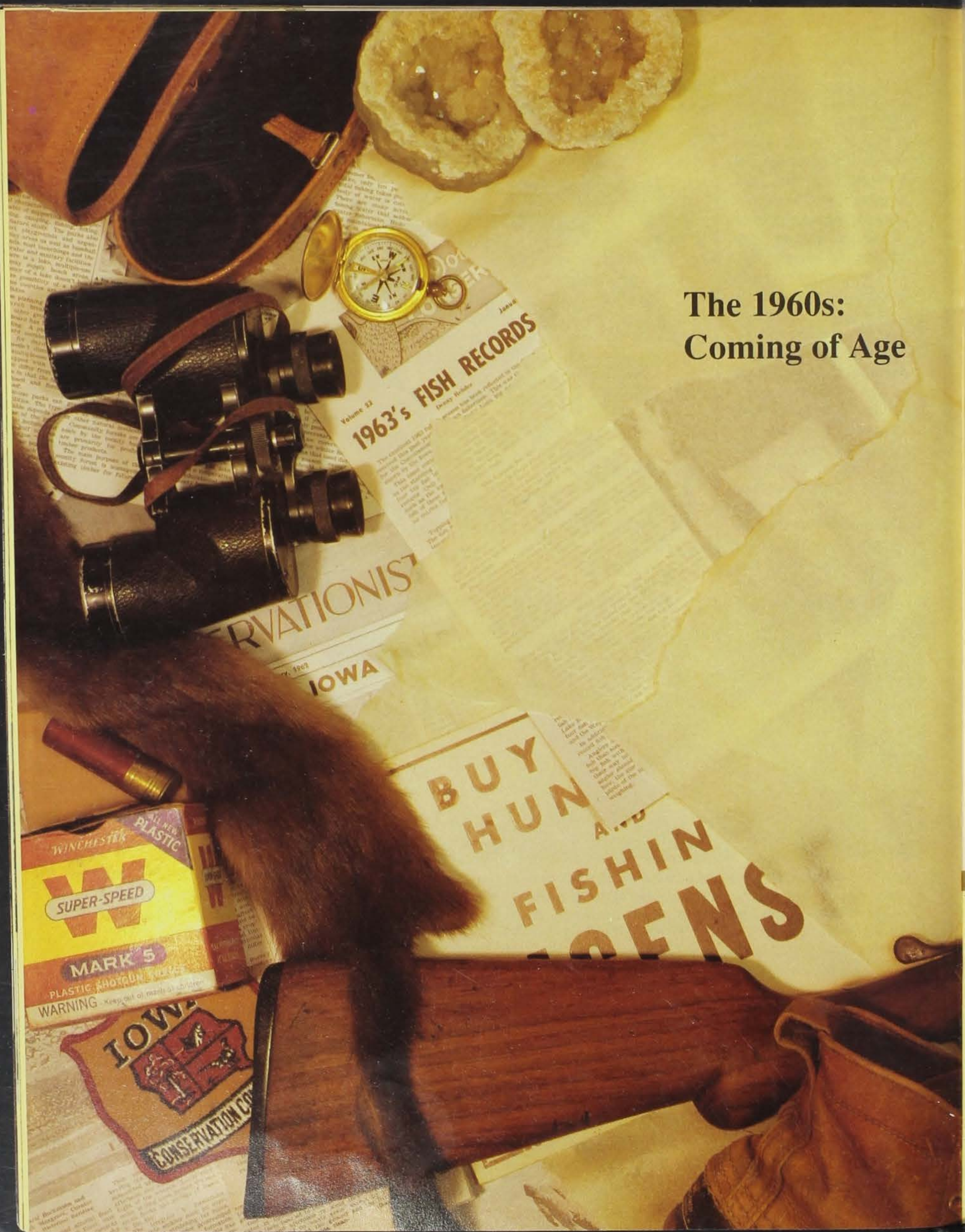
We must keep posted on new developments in the conservation field and must learn how and when and where to contribute our efforts to do the most good. One way is to read the good publications that contain information on the basic concepts of conservation and set out ways and means for real accomplishments.

-- "A Duty to Keep Informed," *by Lester F. Faber, assistant director, April 1959*

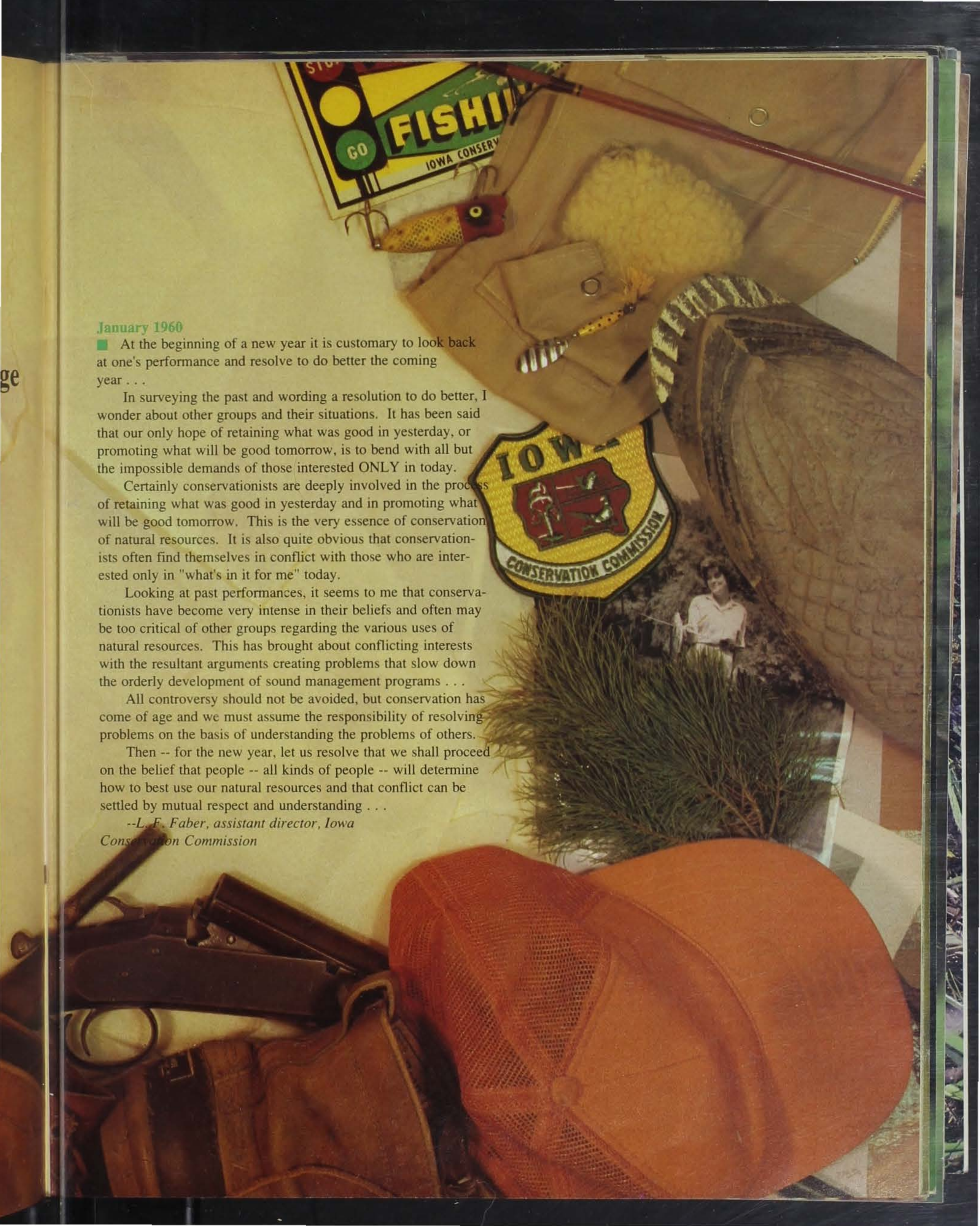
Walleye fry are traded to Texas for 46 Rio Grande turkeys.

The Army Corps of Engineers' flood control project, Coralville Reservoir, is completed.

Maynard Reece wins the federal duck stamp contest for the third time, with a design featuring the famous Labrador retriever, King Buck.



The 1960s: Coming of Age



January 1960

At the beginning of a new year it is customary to look back at one's performance and resolve to do better the coming year . . .

In surveying the past and wording a resolution to do better, I wonder about other groups and their situations. It has been said that our only hope of retaining what was good in yesterday, or promoting what will be good tomorrow, is to bend with all but the impossible demands of those interested ONLY in today.

Certainly conservationists are deeply involved in the process of retaining what was good in yesterday and in promoting what will be good tomorrow. This is the very essence of conservation of natural resources. It is also quite obvious that conservationists often find themselves in conflict with those who are interested only in "what's in it for me" today.

Looking at past performances, it seems to me that conservationists have become very intense in their beliefs and often may be too critical of other groups regarding the various uses of natural resources. This has brought about conflicting interests with the resultant arguments creating problems that slow down the orderly development of sound management programs . . .

All controversy should not be avoided, but conservation has come of age and we must assume the responsibility of resolving problems on the basis of understanding the problems of others.

Then -- for the new year, let us resolve that we shall proceed on the belief that people -- all kinds of people -- will determine how to best use our natural resources and that conflict can be settled by mutual respect and understanding . . .

--L. F. Faber, assistant director, Iowa Conservation Commission

■ 1960

A cooperative hunter safety training program is adopted by the commission.

During the winter, 39 Texas-trapped wild turkeys, commonly known as the Rio Grande variety, are released in the Yellow River State Forest in an attempt to reintroduce wild turkeys to Iowa.

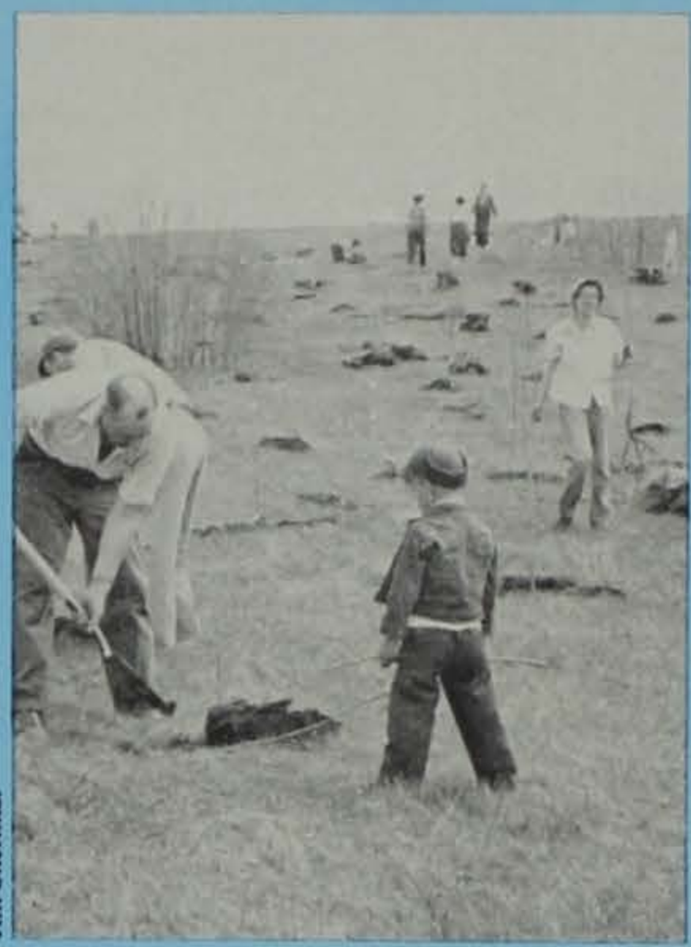
The U.S. Postal Service issues a four-cent water conservation postage stamp. "No other resource so directly affects the welfare, comfort and happiness of all the people. Without water, soil cannot produce the food and fiber needed to nourish and clothe our rapidly increasing population . . ."

Inmates from Anamosa begin work at Yellow River Forest on projects which include road widening, enlargement of parking and picnic sites, building access roads for foresters and game managers and an all-weather access road to Little Paint Creek.

Eighty muskellunge are stocked in Clear Lake and West Okoboji, the first stocking of muskies in Iowa waters.

Research scientists are throwing new light on how trees and other plants grow. In fact it is light, they say, that controls plant development. A pigment present in plants in invisible quantities acts as a "triggering mechanism" for growth.

--Scientists Say Light



Jim Sherman

Arbor Day should be a family affair, an event for the youngsters to carry in their memories along with a tree to call their own that will see them through their "growin' up" years.

April 1960

It's Official: Iowa's First Arbor Day

■ The largest living thing, the oldest living thing, the most important product used for our basic need, shelter, and perhaps the most universal symbol of nature's beneficence to mankind; all these are recognized on this day for trees.

There is much more to Arbor Day than just the physical planting of a tree. When we plant a tree it signifies many things: shelter for wildlife, protection for the soil and water, a thing of beauty for all that see it, and a strong hope in the planter that he may watch it grow and develop . . .

Every man that sees a tree experiences something different, but to all it symbolizes life and hope. In the words of the originator, "Other holidays repose upon the past, Arbor Day proposes for the future."

--Duane DeKock, public relations officer

July 1960

What Color Safest?

■ According to tests recently conducted by the U.S. Army and members of the optical profession, fluorescent orange is the color most likely to deter deer hunting accidents. In the test, both white and yellow targets were shown briefly and the shooters were told to fire at only the white ones. Results proved a 12 percent failure of accurate color recognition. This would seem to rule out yellow as a safe color for hunting apparel . . .

The Conservation Commission's "Stop Wishin' Go Fishin" car stickers were very effective during the summer of 1960 -- at one Des Moines barber shop at least. The camera caught its owners as they were putting up this sign on August 24 preparatory to closing the shop for a whole week of every chair's favorite pastime. Regular customers say they came back with good tans and steady hands that not only cut hair better, but spread wide whenever "the ones that got away" were mentioned.

George Tovey

August 1960

Bass by the Bagful

■ Science and industry have combined again in such a way as to aid the distribution of bass fry to farm ponds all over the state. Using plastic bags to make delivery of the fish gives the Iowa Conservation Commission a big help in the field of fish management.

In early years the fish were delivered directly to ponds by department trucks. Ten ponds a day was considered a day's work. For a hundred ponds or more, two weeks were required to collect and distribute the fish using two trucks. As the number of ponds increased and farmers got into the swing of having backyard fishing, it was necessary to bring the bass and bluegills to a central location and have the pond owners supply their own containers and do their own stocking. This system allowed some 500 ponds to be serviced, but it still took four men and two trucks a month to stock 40,000 to 80,000 bass . . .

George Tovey

Some 80,000 bass in bags of 200 each have been distributed to farm ponds throughout Iowa. The oxygen-filled bags have practically insured loss-free transportation of fish.

Now deliveries are made in plastic bags filled with cold water and pumped full of oxygen before sealing. When the pond owner gets home with his container of fish, he can put it in the water without opening it until the water in the bag has attained the same temperature as that of the pond. This, with the other improvements in techniques, has reduced transportation losses to practically zero . . .

--Dale Stufflebeam, fisheries biologist

October 1961

First "Muskie" for West Okoboji

■ Iowa's first honest-to-goodness "muskie" in West Okoboji was captured in mid-August by biologists.

This muskellunge or muskie is the first sign of successful planting of stocked muskies in Iowa waters in the history of Iowa conservation practices and fishery management. It is one of the 40 stocked in West Okoboji in 1960.

A biology survey crew captured the muskie in a routine survey haul . . .

The fish, weighing 1.5 pounds and measuring 19 inches, was well marked with typical muskellunge coloring and identification. On September 30, 1960, when the muskies were released, they measured from 9 to 12 inches and weighed 1/3 pound. These are the only muskies ever stocked in Iowa waters.

. . . it's illegal to take muskies, but someday . . . we hope to have the muskie available for sport fishing.

--Carol Buckmann, information specialist

March 1962

Mystery and Beauty -- Spring Goose Flight

■ Along the broad alluvial flood plain of the Missouri River, cars stop along the highways, cameras are cocked, binoculars scan the sky while high overhead, at times barely distinguishable, is heard a low but growing Au-unk, Au-unk, call of the "waveys." Mother Nature, as she has done for centuries, is about to present the most spectacular mystery the world over.

The low hum of beating wings increases to a loud whir and the clamor of thousands of voices rings in your ears -- the migration of the blue and snow geese is in full swing . . .

--Carol Buckmann and Jack Musgrove, curator, State Historical Building

Governs Plant Growth, August 1960

■ **1961**

The commission purchases Big Spring Trout Hatchery. Prior to acquisition, the hatchery had been operated as a commercial producer for the fish pond on the grounds, where club members paid an annual fee plus $1.25 per pound for live trout taken from the pond.

This is the first year Iowans must purchase a state trout stamp to take trout from designated waters. The stamp costs $2. Proceeds from the sale of these stamps will be used exclusively to improve the trout program.

The Wildlife Research and Exhibit Station opens at Ledges State Park near Boone.

A total of 680 pheasants are released in northwest Jefferson County near Fairfield. This is the first such mass stocking made in that section of the state and is an experimental effort to see if the lower limit of the pheasant range can be pushed southward on that side of the state.

Wood from Iowa forests is used in everything from bowling pins to push

brooms. The $25 million netted annually from wood and its manufacture is big business.

■ **1962**

The *Iowa Conservationist* sports a new nameplate with the May issue. The first, designed by Maynard Reece, appeared for more than 20 years.

A new book of outdoor-adventure stories, written-for both armchair and active adventurers, is released by the Iowa State University Press. *Stories From Under the Sky*, is a collection of 36 stories written by John Madson, a former editor of the *Iowa Conservationist* magazine. Fifteen of the stories in the book were originally printed in the *Conservationist*.

The Ding Darling Foundation calls a meeting in Omaha to implement planning for a Lewis and Clark Trail commemorating the route taken by the early explorers. The trail was initiated by Darling prior to his death. Iowa has four state parks on or near the proposed trail, including Lewis and Clark State Park.

A mass stocking of 1,000

Jim Sherman

Campfires fall by the wayside as charcoal briquets and grills become more popular. A person can also buy a smoked-flavored sauce for meat.

Jim Sherman

Campers on the Fourth of July brought forth every type and description of outdoor sleeping, eating and recreation equipment. With numbers of campers increasing by 30 percent annually, parks are crowded.

Jim Sherman

This car-top sleeper can be set up in about seven minutes and features a three-quarter width mattress.

Jim Sherman

Called a "sleeper," beds are in one end, cooking utensils in the other. With a lower center of gravity, they pull easier than trailers that are high enough to stand in.

August 1961

Roughing it the Modern Way

■ In case you hadn't noticed, nearly one out of 10 of your neighbors is a camper. The number of people enjoying overnight and weekend camping has increased so much since the boom began after World War II that the parks are hard pressed to take care of them . . .

When national attention is focused on one subject, you can be sure business and industry are going to respond. And how! From the simple wall tent and small trailer have evolved a multitude of accessories, gadgets and sleeping accomodations. Tents have convulsed through pup, pop and cabin style designs. Trailers grew too. Longer and higher, but mainly in the development of space saving features. Gas-powered heating, lighting and refrigerating systems make the modern vacation trailer a truly mobile home . . .

Besides all of the standard rigs, many innovations have appeared which start with sleeping in the back of station wagons, progress to boots over the back of the wagon and conclude with tent combined with station wagon . . . There is literally no end of different methods to accomplish one purpose, that of sleeping comfortably outdoors . . .

--Malcolm K. Johnson, editor

March 1962

J. N. (Ding) Darling

■ Although 12 years have passed since Jay Darling retired as the *Register's* cartoonist, he continued to come frequently to his studio in our building, and he never lost his buoyant interest in people and causes.

So to many of us who had worked with him he still seemed a member of the staff when he died [February 12, 1962].

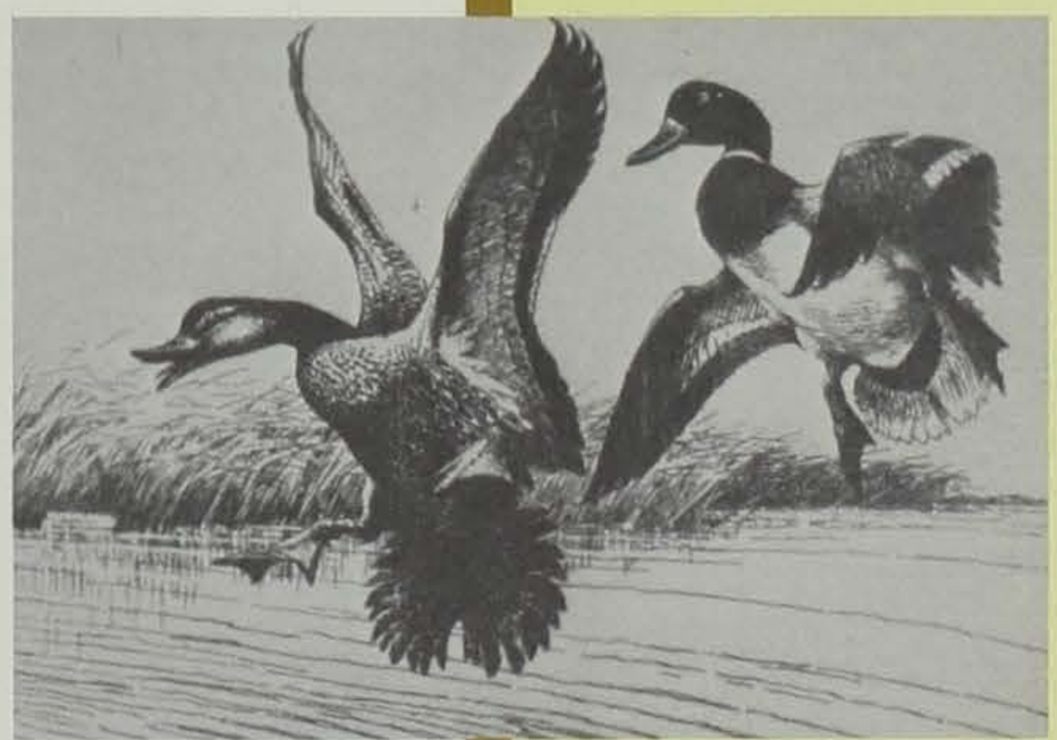
It is tempting to speak of him now in eulogistic terms, but few things would have embarrassed him more than a eulogy. And nothing we could say now would add to the prestige and stature of an artist who had been recognized for decades as a leading American cartoonist, who had twice been awarded the Pulitzer prize, and whose position was established, long before his death, in the tradition of the great cartoonists and satirists reaching back from Thomas Nast to Daumier . . .

No one had to work close to Ding to know that he had integrity, strong convictions and the courage to express his views. He once said, "My convictions may not be worth much to the world, but they are my own, and if I am going to go through life expressing anybody's convictions, they are going to be mine."

. . . His satire could be sharp. He could punctuate a pompous figure with a few strokes. He could quickly ridicule a silly idea. But he rarely drew in anger. He once said that he had made it a practice to stay away from the drawing board when he was angry . . .

It is never possible to measure the influence of an articulate man who speaks his views forcefully, and we will never be able to measure the influence of Jay Darling. All we know is that because of him millions of people have looked at the problems of our times from a fresh point of view, with a sharper perspective, a new insight. And we know that influence of this type does not stop when today's paper is discarded. It goes on and on subtly into the future, its origin perhaps forgotten but its force forever effective.

--Reprinted courtesty of the *Des Moines Register*



Two of the many illustrations of Ding Darling's that appeared in the Iowa Conservationist. *At left,* Look Out, Here Come the Nature Lovers, *appeared in the April 1942 issue; and above, the first federal duck stamp, designed by Darling in 1934.*

pheasants, 435 cocks and 565 hens, are made during the summer and early fall in northeastern Henry County, part of an area in southeast Iowa currently closed to pheasant hunting.

The spotted gar is added to the list of 133 native Iowa fishes.

■ 1963

Everett B. Speaker is appointed Conservation Commission director.

Dr. Paul L. Errington of Iowa State University is awarded the Aldo Leopold Medal for an outstanding contribution to wildlife conservation. Dr. Errington is the second Iowan to receive this award. In 1950 it was awarded to "Ding" Darling.

New Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery is dedicated.

The Iowa Conservation Commission and the Nebraska Game, Forestation and Parks Commission meet to discuss the mutual problems concerning the development of the Missouri River.

An Iowa-Nebraska committee is formed to plan jointly the development and operation of Missouri River areas.

Twenty-two Reeves pheasants, 10 cocks and 12 hens, are released in Stephens State Forest.

■ 1964

First listing of Iowa's big fish awards appears in the January issue of the *Iowa Conservationist*.

More than 4,600 acres of federal land in Appanoose, Davis, Lee and Van Buren counties are purchased. The acquisition of these federal lands will double the size of the Shimek State Forest. The area will be developed for hunting, fishing, primitive camping, picnicking, hiking and trail riding.

Sixteen pairs of Giant Canada geese are stocked at Ingham Lake in Emmet County.

Iowa has the highest pheasant harvest of any state in the country with 1,737,000 ringnecks taken.

American hunters spend about $1.3 billion a year on their favorite sport, helping the economy of remote areas where the hunters' dollars are badly needed. Many tourist areas would dry up in the fall and winter if it were not for the hunters who seek out places of small population . . .
--Hunting Aids the Economy, November 1964

July 1963

The "Cures" For Dutch Elm Disease

■ Many alleged preventives and cures are offered to the public because of the great interest in the control of Dutch elm disease.

During the last few years injections, solid treatments and ointments of crankcase oil have been offered to the public. Bottles filled with turpentine and pastes that are to be smeared in the main crotch of the tree are also two alleged remedies made available to the public. As we are curing Dutch elm disease, some of these "cures" will also kill ants, caterpillars, beetles and other insects. One of the tree sprays offered to the public not only "protects elms" but can also be used for whitewall tires and rust on chrome . . .

There are also sprays on the market that claim to be effective against the elm beetles and also attractive to birds and animals. These sprays will not produce runny eyes, stiff necks or upset stomachs as other insecticides are liable to.

As ridiculous as these claims may be, there are many gullible people that will spend their money for these "cures and preventives." Public cooperation is very important to help eliminate the so-called Dutch elm disease experts that recommend these cures . . .

--Stephen Kelley

August 1963

Where Goes the Iowa Duck?

■ Each fall with the advent of cooler weather, wild fowlers eagerly await the arrival of the waterfowl from the north. Yet few hunters understand that not all birds which they harvest in the fall come from some far northern summer home. Many of the ducks taken in Iowa each year were hatched and raised in our marshes and potholes. Still others may move northward before beginning their fall migration and are harvested by hunters in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin and other northern states. Still others may move laterally across the United States and may be taken in states to the east or west of us.

Many persons might wonder how we know the travels of these birds. Bird banding provides most of the answers on migration routes, the distribution of breeding and wintering populations, hunting mortality, natural mortality and other data vital to the management and regulation of our migratory game birds.

. . . in Iowa, personnel of the Conservation Commission trap, band and release several thousand ducks and other migratory game birds annually. The information gained from these bandings is of great value to the department in determining what happens to the waterfowl which are raised on our marshes. This information is also vital to the federal government and other states within the Flyway in setting seasons, bag limits and other regulations.

--Bob Barratt, assistant superintendent of game

January 1965

Discovering an Ancient Indian Fort

■ A lost chapter of ancient Iowa history has been discovered in the rugged hills of northeastern Iowa. . . . Through the application of archeological techniques, a fortified Indian village, the first fortification found in Iowa dating from ancient Indian times, was discovered. The village is located on a rise of land overlooking the junction of French Creek and the Upper Iowa River. The discovery dates back to about 1200 A.D. The antler in the photo at left may have been used as a rake by the Indians.

February 1966

Where Did the Wilderness Go?

■ The American people have become slaves to the combustion engine, and the combustion engine is progressively destroying outdoor recreation, fouling the air, killing flora in metropolitan areas and contributing very substantially to water pollution.

Some scientists maintain that eventually air pollution will be a greater menace to the health of mankind than filthy water. In the light of damage already done to our water resources, this is hard to believe . . .

--Ernest Swift, Conservation News, National Wildlife Federation reprint

July 1964

The Vanishing Woodland

■ If one were to ask, "What is the most destructive force attacking our Iowa woodlands" he might expect an answer such as: "insects," "disease," "fire," or "man, through indiscriminate cutting." He probably would be somewhat surprised to hear the answer is "livestock."

Generally woodlands occupy the rougher land in Iowa. Timberland suitable for cultivation has mostly been cleared by now. Many owners of woodland feel this is a wasteland and they must make some immediate income from it to at least pay the taxes. Taking the short-range view they turn livestock into their timber in the hopes some forage can be utilized. Grazing timber has been taken as a matter of fact, and down through the years our timberland has deteriorated from productive woodland to wasteland in many cases.

Our native timbers are incapable of providing adequate forage for livestock. In search of sparse forage, livestock destroy the water holding capacity of the forest soil, eat young seedlings and damage large trees.

Over countless years organic matter has built up on the forest floor in the form of decomposed leaves, twigs and branches. Beneath this a highly porous soil has developed which soaks up rain water as it filters through the organic layer. This huge sponge can be destroyed in a few short years through trampling by livestock. This results in greatly increased runoff after heavy rains. The water can no longer entirely soak into the soil to be used by trees and replenish underground water supplies. Instead it is turned into a destructive force. This force carries topsoil which has taken centuries to develop. This precious soil is deposited into our silt-clogged streams. The water and soil nutrients which could be used by trees to make rapid growth are lost, resulting in less vigorous trees. Trees which lose their vigor are targets for the onslaught of tree disease and insect pests.

Livestock feed upon young tree seedlings, thereby destroying tomorrow's timber. As a timber is grazed over the years and the older trees pass out of the picture, a beautiful forest will turn into an economic desert of brush, thorn bushes, snags and weeds.

Large trees are damaged by livestock. When the hoof of an animal knocks a piece of bark off a tree root, an entry is made for infection. This infection is in the form of wood rotting fungi which destroys the tree from within.

Livestock compete intensely with wildlife. They destroy the watershed qualities, ruin the aesthetic value and lay waste to the productive capacity of the forest. By destroying the productivity of the forest the timber products are destroyed along with the many jobs they would create.

There is a tax break.

As an incentive to prevent this form of destruction Iowa's Timber Reserve Law provides a tax reduction for those owners who exclude livestock from their woodland. Entirely too few take advantage of this method to improve their timber.

Next time you are driving through the country, take notice of the timber pastures with large trees dotted about. Under these large trees will be gooseberry, crab, prickly ash and buckbrush. You will be viewing the remains of a native forest. Livestock grazed off the tree seedlings over the years. Only seedlings undesirable to the livestock were left. The large trees have been disappearing through attrition. Ask yourself, "What will be left when the few large remaining trees die or are cut?" There are no young trees to take their place -- only brush.

-- Bruce Plum, district forester

■ 1965

The Iowa State Preserves System is established.

The first Eastern wild turkeys are introduced to Iowa.

Two severe March blizzards take their toll of ringnecks in northern Iowa -- pheasant populations are down approximately 50 percent in the northwest and north-central parts of the state.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act becomes effective January 1. Under the act, Iowa receives federal money for recreational land acquisition and development.

■ 1966

The *Iowa Conservationist* marks its 25th anniversary.

The mailing list for the *Iowa Conservationist* is updated to include the Zip code system.

The Conservation Commission approves a change in the deer license procedures. The hunter will receive a deer license on their third application if they were turned down both of the two previous years.

March 21 is designated as "Bird Day" in Iowa. It is believed to be the first time that such action has taken place since the 40th General Assembly enacted the law in 1923. Iowa law requires all public schools to observe the date by devoting a part of the school day to a

special study of birds, their habitats, usefulness and the best means of protecting them.

Jack Kirstein

For the first time, conservation officers have a "uniform" look -- mainly because for the first time they have a uniform paid for by the state. This new look was made possible by the last session of the General Assembly when a law allowing the commission to purchase clothing for Lands and Waters and Fish and Game personnel who are classified as conservation officers was passed.

■ **1967**

Deer hunters are now required to wear blaze orange when hunting.

Iowa Legislature proclaims the geode as Iowa's official state rock.

Commission approval is given to adopt permanent rules to provide for controlled hunting on Forney

April 1968

Ruffed Grouse 'Drumming': Curious Calling Card

■ Standing quietly alert on a log in the Little Paint Creek Study Area of the Yellow River Forest, a male ruffed grouse surveys the surroundings. Suddenly, but with almost mechanical precision, the bird begins his courtship drumming, or beating of wings, that lets other grouse and the world know he and spring are here.

The spirited movement produces a sound which moves vibrantly through the forest. To the ears of a human, direction and distance are vague, but other male grouse are aware of the proclaimed domain of the drummer while a female grouse may begin to move toward the sound with irresistible urge to mate . . .

Drumming by males on the Little Paint Creek Study Area in 1967 began about March 15 and was best described as sporadic at that time. On April 11, near the peak in intensity of drumming for the season, one male was observed to drum at two-minute intervals from one-half hour before sunrise until two hours after sunrise. The bird took only one 15-minute break during the entire period. Following April 15, drumming activity gradually decreased until June 1 when no more drums were heard until fall . . .

--Wayne R. Porath and Paul A. Vohs, Jr., Department of Zoology and Entomology, Iowa State University

June 1968

The Outdoor Classroom: "An Activity Worth a Million Words"

■ "We try to teach conservation by doing, seeing and touching rather than by reading alone. I feel this type of outdoor education is the best way to reinforce the conservation taught in the classroom. If a picture is worth a thousand words, an activity is worth a million," stated Larry Dean, science coordinator for the Fort Dodge Public Schools, explaining an outdoor classroom program which took place last month at Dolliver State Park.

About 850 students from Fort Dodge public and parochial schools and surrounding rural schools participated in the program now in its second year of practice at Dolliver.

Organized and directed by Mr. Dean, this outdoor classroom was the first of its kind in Iowa initiated in the spring of 1967. Since then, its success has been felt not only in the expanded program at Dolliver this year, but also in the similar programs that have been instituted throughout the state . . .

Seeing these programs in action and observing both the students and consulting staff is enough to predict the long-range value of the outdoor classroom, and more than enough to want to promote them, and to provide the opportunity for every child to learn by "seeing, doing and touching."

--Kris Elin, editor

March 1968

This is 'Sugar Bush' Country

■ "Low tonight in the 20s -- highs tomorrow should reach 45 to 50 degrees. This pattern will continue for the next five days."

This March forecast reminds us all that spring is just around the corner. To the maple "sugar bush" operator it means he must act to take advantage of the early heavy sap flow . . .

Whether the sugar grove is in Vermont, Kentucky, Michigan or Iowa, the basic sugar bush procedure is the same . . .

Maple syrup production is one of the oldest agricultural practices in this country. Indians were using this product before white men came, and syrup production has continued as an interesting and profitable venture ever since.

--Gene Hertel, assistant state forester

February 1968

The Geode -- Iowa's State Rock

■ The year 1967 was a great one for the geode (pronounced ge'-ode). During that session of the Legislature, the geode was proclaimed Iowa's official state rock.

Particularly fascinating to rock hounds, geodes are found in banks and cliffs, sand and gravel bars and streams. Virtually every stream in southern Iowa from Ottumwa to Keokuk, and the Des Moines River into which they flow, will have a harvest of geodes.

Technically described as a hollow concretion lined with crystals, the geode is normally found as a nodule, often hollow, in sedimentary rocks. In Iowa these sedimentary rocks are predominantly limestone . . .

Not all geodes are collector's items. Many are solid quartz inside and hence, strictly speaking, not geodes inasmuch as geodes are defined as hollow concretions . . .

March 1969

Cause and Control of Water Pollution

■ Over the past several years most of the emphasis on pollution control has been directed toward municipal sewage and insutrial wastes as the main source of pollution of our public waters. With the passage of more stringent pollution control laws considerable progress has been made in this direction.

However, the greatest source of pollution of our public waters has always been from surface runoff. It has been estimated that this source, which originates on farmland, roads, highways and development projects, produces up to 700 times the solids coming from municipal and industrial sources.

The estimated annual deposit of silt into our nation's public waters has been placed at 850,000 acre feet. This would equal the annual water needs of a city of [more than] five million people.

Surface runoff, when it carries soil with it, does more than reduce the capacity of the reservoir or stream. Nitrate, insecticides, animal wastes and other undesirable materials are deposited into these waters, destroying beneficial aquatic and marine life.

The scenic and recreational value of these waters is effected also. Yet these losses are negligible when compared with the long-range effect on future generations of this country by the reduced capability of our land to produce the necessary food and fiber.

Surface runoff can and is being controlled as evidenced in our local soil districts over the state. This has been brought about, in part, by new ideas and a new approach to the problem by the local soil districts.

A part of this surface runoff control is located above our state-owned artificial lakes. At this time the Lands and Waters Division has, under its jurisdiction, 19 artificial lakes in serious danger of coming to an untimely end for recreational purposes because of excessive siltation.

These 19 lakes have a total watershed of 215,250 acres; of this total 156,400 acres are subject to excessive erosion which means they are a serious threat to the reservoir below.

Most of these acres are under private ownership and require the cooperation of the landowner to install effective erosion control measures. This is handled effectively and efficiently by a memorandum of understanding with each county soil conservation district whereby the Conservation Commission . . . assists with cost-sharing of surface runoff control practices.

From 1964 through 1968, 28,700 of these acres were properly treated with grassed backslope terraces, silt retention structures, tree plantings and other permanent practices, and are no longer considered a threat to the lakes below.

If this amount of completed practices were concentrated in the Lake Darling, Pine Lake and Geode watersheds, we could safely say these lakes would be completely free from the threat of further siltation and pollution. And, with proper maintenance of the control measures, they would provide an area with a life expectancy of several hundred years.

So far this program has proved to be economically feasible, completely justifiable and of the utmost importance to the future development and preservation of our state-owned, water-oriented recreation areas.

--Everett Pierce, erosion control officer

Lake in Fremont County for the 1967 season.

The first successful incubation of muskie eggs in Iowa occurs at the Lansing Fish Hatchery.

■ **1968**

Fred A. Priewert is appointed Conservation Commission director.

A 16-day hunting season for grouse, the first since 1923, is set for a limited area in northeast Iowa, the only part of the state the grouse currently calls home.

■ **1969**

Hunters harvest more than one million each of pheasants, quail, rabbits and squirrels.

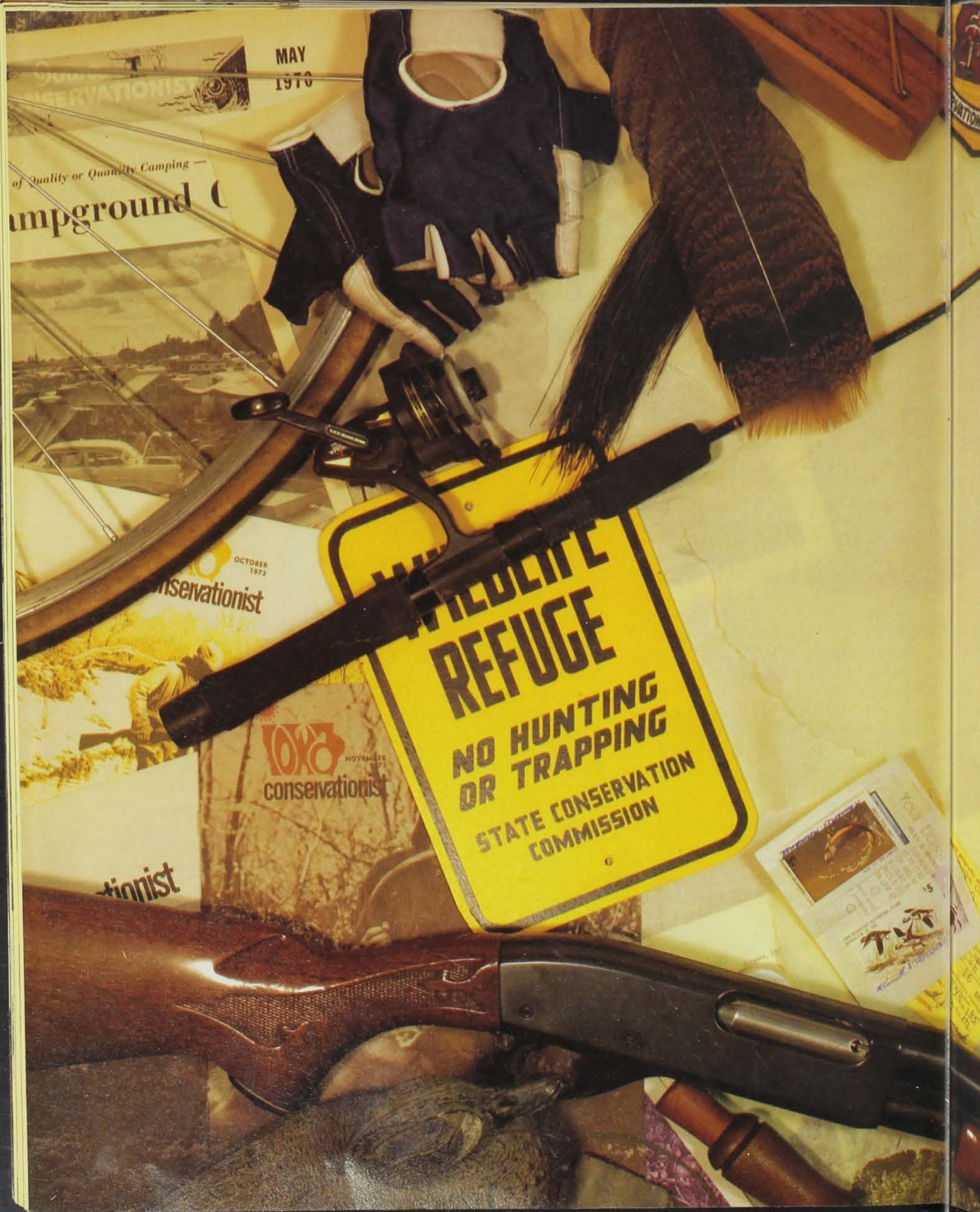
Maynard Reece wins his fourth federal duck stamp competition. The stamp features white-winged scoter.

The mobile Conservation-Exhibit, begun in 1947, is retired.

Red Rock Reservoir is completed.

Without adequate conservation education, without immediate steps to fill this dangerous void that exists right now, and without genuine concern and active support by every citizen, we may soon see the day when accounts of hunting and fishing trips are paragraphs in a classroom history book . . .

--What Was Conservation?, March 1969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STATE CONSERVATION
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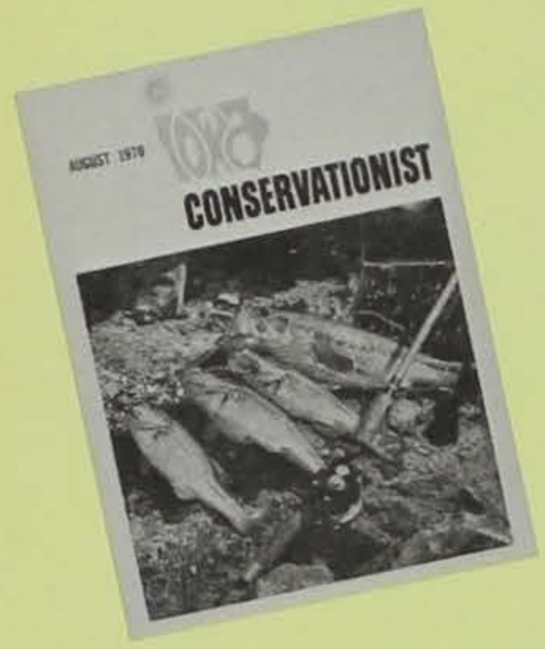
The 1970s: Challenges

September 1970

■ . . . The warning signs are many across the nation. Fish are killed by pollution. Our national symbol -- the bald eagle -- is being done in by pesticide poisoning. Destruction of wildlife habitat is cutting down on game populations. Water, air, noise and land pollution deaden the senses.

Preserving this great outdoor heritage cannot be accomplished by high-blown phrases, idealism or by passing a multitude of laws. All of these have their places certainly, but their value is limited. The public must be willing to pay the price for quality environment and good resource management. Funds must by made available for conservation and enforcement of laws. Sacrifices must be made and citizens must support good legislation. We must awaken to the realities of our environmental dilemma . . .

■ **1970**
Iowa Conservationist receives a new nameplate. At the same time the magazine increases from 8 to 12 pages.



Subscription rates change to $2 for two years and $3.50 for a four-year subscription.

Rathbun Reservoir opens.

Two students discuss with the commission their discovery of a cave behind Cold Springs State Park.

All hawks and owls are now protected by a continuous closed season in Iowa.

Snowmobiles are required to be registered in the state.

September 1970

The Challenge We Face

■ Iowa, so rich in natural resources and beauty, is a precious gift. One which we have no right to desecrate in the name of economic gain. We simply cannot ruin the natural resources that have contributed so much to our life.

Today our environment and the continued use of natual resources hangs in the balance. Even more, our very existence hangs in a delicate balance. If for "a few dollars more" the environment is destroyed, civilization as we know it could well go down the drain. It won't only be a silent spring, but a silent summer, fall and winter. We are already heading down this trail of no return.

The warning signs are many across the nation. Fish are killed by pollution. Our national symbol --- the bald eagle -- is being done in by pesticide poisoning. Destruction of wildlife habitat is cutting down on game populations. Water, air, noise and land pollution deaden the senses.

Preserving this great outdoor heritage cannot be accomplished by high-blown phrases, idealism or by passing a multitude of laws. All of these have their places certainly, but their value is limited. The public must be willing to pay the price for quality environment and good resource management. Funds must be made available for conservation and enforcement of laws. Sacrifices must be made and citizens must support good legislation. We must awaken to the realities of our environmental dilemma.

Not everything fits into a rigid and frequently questionable cost-benefit ratio. In many cases it must be stated that "this is basic, this is beauty, this is a great gift that nature bestowed upon us." In other words, our natural resources must be preserved and wisely used. We just don't have the right to destroy them or view it only in terms of economic gain. For by destroying our environment, we destroy ourselves. We must work with nature, not against her. We must become more a partner with the earth, not a plunderer of it.

As reasoning creatures, men have the intelligence, the will and spirit to accomplish this. This is the challenge we face.

--David Evans, editor

September 1970

The Point System Adds Up -- to Wise Duck Management

■ As dawn breaks over mist-shrouded marshes and rivers on October 3, Iowa duck hunters will experience a new type of duck hunting -- the point system . . .

The point values are as follows: 90 point bird -- hen mallard, wood duck, canvasback, redhead, hooded merganser and black duck; 20 point bird -- drake mallard, ring-necked duck and hen pintail; 10 point bird -- blue-winged teal, green-winged teal, gadwall, drake pintail, widgeon, shoveler and all others.

--Richard A. Bishop, game biologist

August 1971

Deer Harvest in 1970 is Tops

■ . . . Between 1953 and 1966 the deer herd continued to increase while providing many hours of recreation for thousands of hunters. In 1966 it appears that the herd stabilized its population but in years since has begun to decline slightly. To counter this decline the Iowa Conservation Commission decreased license quotas for shotgun hunters from 22,000 in 1967 to 18,000 in 1970. The slow decline in the deer herd has continued and further restrictions in deer hunting will be necessary now and in future years, if we are to allow the herd to build up to the numbers we know the habitat can support . . .

--Lee Gladfelter, game biologist

April 1971

Monitoring Deer Movements

■ Three unusual white-tailed deer are roaming the countryside in the vicinity of Ledges State Park near Boone. These deer are quite distinguishable as each has bright yellow, red or blue plastic ear tags and an unusual collar around its neck. But what really is unique about these animals is that Iowa Conservation Commission game biologist Lee Gladfelter is monitoring their movements by electronic devices.

Yes, Iowa's deer have become a part of the electronic age! Neatly packaged inside the collar is a compact, shock resistant radio transmitter and miniature antenna . . .

--Sonny Satre, circulation manager

May 1970
Iowa the Beautiful? or the Ugly?

■ Iowa, bounded by two of the nation's greatest rivers, enjoys a unique beauty all its own.

River bluffs and prairies, caves and wind-swept hills, natural lakes and native timber, sparkling streams and rich rolling farmlands. This is our outdoor heritage . . . These natural resources provide recreation for millions.

And yet, in the midst of all this natural beauty there resides a spoiler. Who, with his thoughtlessness, can undo in a single moment what Mother Nature has done in a million years? Who can wreck the carefully planned work of conservationist?

It's the litterbug . . .

Get a litterbag. Use it. Clean up areas. The fight against litter is a constant one, but it must be won. The scenic wonders of nature will not be ours to enjoy much longer unless we join the battle against littering and pollution.

--David Evans

January 1971
Privacy Ends -- Foxes are "Bugged" by Biologists

■ . . . in late September, 21 red foxes in northern Iowa were "wire-tapped" with miniature battery-operated short-wave radios. These radios are fitted in a collar around the animal's neck. A whip antenna off the back of the collar sends a beeping signal through the air which is picked up by a rotational antenna and receivers mounted on a station wagon automobile . . .

--Ron Andrews, furbearer biologist

December 1970
Operation Catfish Crib

■ It certainly seems logical that all Iowans have seen a corn crib or heard of cribbing corn. But if an individual were to mention cribbing catfish he would surely receive some quizzical stares from his audience.

Actually "operation catfish crib" is an experimental method of raising channel catfish carried out by Iowa Conservation Commission fishery technicians. The experiment has proven the feasibility of raising small fingerling catfish to almost frying pan size in only four months . . .

--Sonny Satre, circulation manager

October 1972

Editorial

■ The State Conservation Commission is responsible for setting and regulating hunting seasons on all Iowa game birds except the mourning dove. There is no logical reason for this omission -- doves are certainly game birds and are classified as such by the federal government. Doves are by far the most abundant game bird in North America; their populations are closely monitored and a tremendous surplus is used annually. Opposition to dove hunting stems from arguments based largely on emotion rather than fact . . .

Surveys indicate this state plays an important role in annual dove production. Thus, Iowa has the dubious distinction of being one of the nation's leading dove producers while not permitting hunting of this sporting bird. Doves are migratory and every state south of Iowa hunts them. So as soon as the birds cross the state line, they become "fair game," offering thousands of recreation hours to southern hunters . . .

Why not in Iowa? Opponents of the dove season are few but noisy, and Iowa hunters must become motivated . . . Only then can Iowans be allowed to harvest and enjoy their reasonable, safe and fair share of this abundant resource.

--Fred A. Priewert, director, Iowa Conservation Commission

Electric trolling motors may be used on lakes of 100 acres or less.

A cooperative agreement is set between state and federal governments for the administration of rivers designated as "natural" or scenic.

Iowa wildlife biologists begin stocking Eastern wild turkeys instead of Merriams.

First nesting record in Iowa of the chuck-wills-widow, member of the goatsucker family of birds.

State Marine Fuel Tax Fund starts.

■ **1971**
Iowa Conservationist goes from a 12-page black and white publication to a 16-page two-color publication.

Maynard Reece wins federal duck stamp competition for the fifth time with a design of cinnamon teal.

■ **1972**
Iowa Conservationist is printed on uncoated (non-glossy) recycled paper.

First listing of Iowa Record Deer Racks appears in the *Iowa Conservationist*.

The new Conservation Education Center at Springbrook State Park near Guthrie Center opens.

Coho salmon stocked in West Okoboji.

Iowa's first state duck stamp goes on sale September 1. The stamp, showing three mallards in flight, is designed and painted by Maynard Reece of Des Moines. The stamp is available for $1. Proceeds from the sale of these stamps will go for wetland restoration in Iowa.

Use of DDT is banned in the U.S.

The first buck-only deer season is held, with a portion of the hunters obtaining any-sex li-

July 1972

Pollution Detectives

■ Iowa Conservation Commission park officers are currently being trained as "pollution detectives." Potable water and wastewater treatment courses are now required of officers in all state parks. Park officers took the standard course provided by the State Board of Health on wastewater treatment in March and will attend the three-day potable water testing course in October . . .

Increased public use of state parks has caused the need for more water quality and wastewater treatment spending. In an effort to handle potable water and wastewater treatment demands, state park facilities are hooked on to city lines where possible. Where city lines are not available, waste stabilization lagoons must be constructed to handle wastewater treatment and modern water treatment facilities are built to provide pure, safe water for human consumption . . .

The park officer tests both the potable water supply and lagoons daily . . .

--Roger Sparks, editor

May 1975

Oak Wilt Aerial Survey

■ The newest technique of forest disease detection is through the use of aerial photography. Within the past year, the forestry section of the Iowa Conservation Commission, in cooperation with the Iowa Geological Survey supplied a camera and the U.S. Forest Service supplied color and color infrared film. With this equipment, a cooperative survey was conducted on the Amana Colony's 11,000-acre timber for the detection of oak wilt . . .

--Bill Farris, assistant state forester

July 1974

Death of a River from Channelizartion

■ . . . The channel straightening results in a stream or river shortening because many of the natural bends or meanders are removed. This loss of river bed varies with the stream, but in Iowa most channelized rivers are only 50 to 75 percent of their natural length. If all conditions were the same, we could expect only 50 to 75 percent as many fish as before. Channelizartion not only reduces the stream length but also creates poorer fish habitat. Vegetation along the river bank is destroyed by channelization which results in reduced shading, and ultimately higher water temperatures and reduced leaf and insect drop, both of which reduce desirable fish habitat. Studies in Iowa have shown nearly a 90 percent reduction in fish caught by anglers once the river is channelized . . .

-- by Kay R. Hill, fisheries biologist and Tom Berkley, wildlife biologist

March 1974

Iowa Campers View the Park User Fee

■ . . . we don't want to pay more for the same facilities or services but we are willing to pay more to help improve these facilities, provided that all benefited persons are asked to pay a share. We don't profess to have all the answers. We are simply interested, concerned people who want to preserve and use our natural resources to the fullest. If there is an alternative to the user fee other than increased taxes, we are willing to listen and will certainly support any plan we believe is feasible . . .

--Dale Noel, legislative chairman, Iowa Chapter, National Campers and Hikers Association

February 1974

Land for the Future

■ During the last six months of 1973, the Conservation Commission secured purchase options on [more than] 7,000 acres of Iowa land. When negotiations are complete, Iowans will have new opportunities for a variety of outdoor activities . . .

In July of last year, Governor Ray signed into law the Open Space Land Acquisition Program, proposed to the Legislature by the Conservation Commission. The act provided a sum of $2 million to the commission for the acquisition of land from willing sellers during the 1973-1975 legislative period.

The basic intent of the Open Space Program is to ensure through public ownership, the continued existence of both Iowa's significant natural areas and the recreational and resource qualities of its existing public lands. In essence, the program constitutes the formation of a "public trust" for future generations of Iowans . . .

--Jim Scheffler, resource planner

April 1974

Inflation and the Energy Crisis Hits State Areas

■ State park, water and forest areas may look a bit different to families who camp in or visit them this summer. Inflation and the energy crisis have hit the Iowa Conservation Commission just as hard as they have hit individual families who use our state recreation areas . . .

The cost and availability of several products and services vital to operating state recreation areas are causing particular concern. These include fuel oil for heating, gasoline and garbage hauling.

Park officers will be on duty full time as they have been in the past, however, the frequency of their patrols through the park will be reduced to limit the use of gasoline.

It is planned to reduce certain maintenance activities by 20 percent to meet the gasoline restriction . . . Temperature in state buildings were reduced to 68 degrees or lower, when possible, during the winter months under the energy conservation policy for state departments.

It is too early to estimate the effect the energy crisis will have on our state recreational areas. Indications are that many Iowans will be camping closer to home this year not only because of the concern as to the availability of gasoline, but also because of the increase in gasoline prices . . .

--John Stokes, chief of Lands and Waters Division

June 1975

Death of a Fencerow

■ I saw a fencerow die the other day on a farm in northern Iowa. A man with a bulldozer and his helper with a chainsaw were tearing the row down tree by tree.

It bothered me, because the scene has been repeated time and time again all over the state in recent years.

Nearby a youngster, probably the owner's son, and a dog were playing among the fallen limbs. The inconsistency of the situation was striking and very saddening . . .

. . . Is a 10-foot row of crops worth a lifetime of pleasure with thousands of lessons on life, lessons which only Mother Nature can teach?

The fencerow died. I wonder if any of us really know how much there is to mourn.

--Thomas J. Neal, wildlife biologist

September 1976

Grass Carp Update: A Subject of Controversy

Jim Mayhew

■ . . . On July 20, 1973, 550 one-year-old grass carp were released into Red Haw Lake near Chariton. A dense band of aquatic vegetation covered the entire shallow water perimeter making shoreline fishing impossible after mid-summer . . . Taken into final consideration before the stocking was the fact that in the event we created a "monster," the problem was reversible by eliminating the entire fish population . . .

There should be little worry on the part of the skeptical experts concerning natural reproduction of grass carp . . . Reproduction will not occur in Iowa for we do not have the strict requirements needed in our state . . .

At Red Haw Lake, grass carp have been a huge success for control of submergent vegetation . . . In some circles we were criticized for this approach, but to ignore the obvious benefits from the Red Haw stocking would be worse -- for there is nothing more sad than one with eyes and ears that will not see nor hear.

--Jim Mayhew, fisheries research supervisor

censes, and the remainder restricted to taking a buck with at least one forked antler.

■ 1973

Federal Endangered Species Act becomes law.

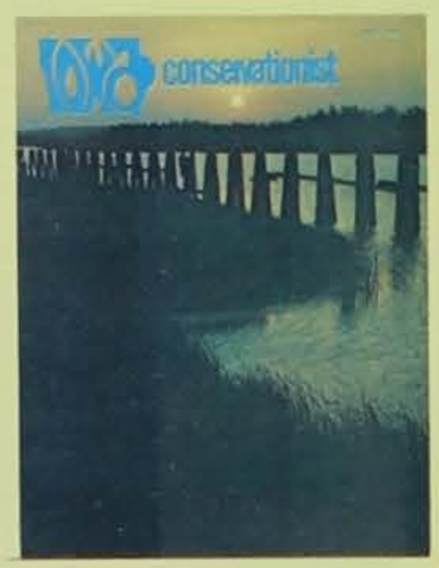
As our streams and rivers go, so goes the cream of our wildlife habitat. Natural streams are magnets for wildlife. In a desert, the free-running stream offers not only water but also lush streamside cover. And it's no different in humid farm regions where streams and their floodplain thickets are the only good habitat in deserts of corn, soybeans and cotton.

. . . Game managers in Missouri, Illinois and Iowa are deeply concerned about stream channelization in farm country where the bottomlands of small streams and rivers hold the best remaining habitat for pheasant, quail, deer, rabbits and other wildlife. Such "stream improvement" is done in the name of flood control, although it rarely solves the problem. It just passes the problem farther downstream -- after transforming fertile natural streams into sterile ditches, and replacing floodplain wildlands with fields of soybeans . . .

--"Deathbeds for Rivers," *by John Madson, February 1973*

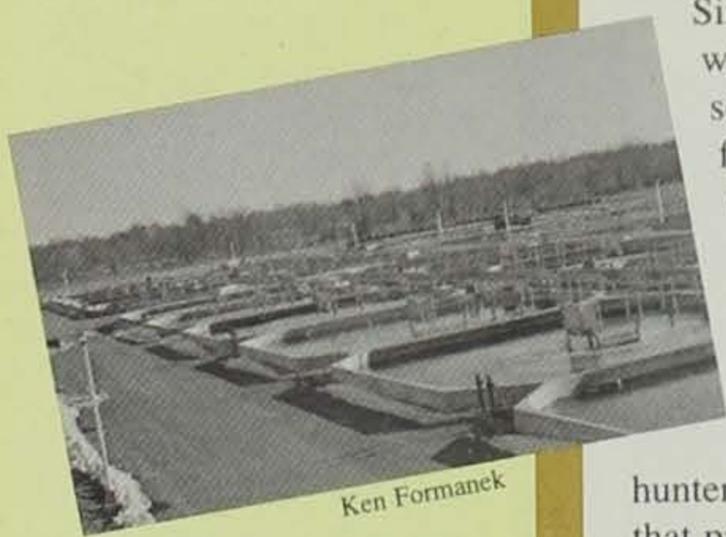
The new Conservation Education Center is designated a National Environmental Education Landmark by the Department of the Interior.

■ **1974**
Iowa Conservationist goes to full color.



First spring gobbler season is held, May 4-19. Approximately 1,500 Iowa residents apply for licenses, 450 are issued and 117 hunters bag birds. A license cost $15.

Last trade is made with Missouri for wild turkeys.


Ken Formanek

The new Rathbun Fish Hatchery, the first intensive warm water hatchery in the U. S., opens.

Youth Conservation Corps begins in Iowa.

January 1976

Anti-Hunting: A Wasteful Issue

■ Today's surge of anti-hunting sentiment is nothing new; in one form or another, it has existed in this country for a long time.

. . . the period after World War II saw a shift from a rural to an urban-oriented society. Hunting is basically a rural art, and Americans were growing away from their rural traditions . . .

Then came the miracle age of electronics. The outdoors could be brought into the living room through a picture tube, and Disney film productions lost little time in doing so . . . A vast Sunday evening audience was riveted to the Disney version of wildlife. Starting with a proven formula for success -- the humanization of wildlife . . .

Others, having considered the matter a little deeper, confused conservation with preservation. Since they recognize wildlife conservation as something "good," they feel that killing wildlife must be something "bad." They have never quite understood that wildlife conservation and the modern hunter are inseparable, nor that preservation is only a minor element of conservation.

Emotion is a prime ingredient in any crusade, but if real progress is to be made, common sense must prevail and lasting solutions must be based on facts, not emotion. Anti-hunters are still in the first stage, with demogogues playing on emotion and prejudice in an effort to gain a following . . .

It appears to us that the greatest gap between hunter and anti-hunter exists at the lowest levels of outdoor experience, knowledge and perception. The greater the lack of real outdoor mileage and perception, the greater this gap between hunter and anti-hunter . . .

From early history, the hunter concerned himself with welfare of game, and developed certain traditions, laws and ethics that govern the taking of game. It is the hunter who willingly spends money in the form of licenses and special taxes to support game management. It was a hunter who saw the need for biological facts and principles by which to manage game -- Aldo Leopold. It was a hunter who promoted ways to finance the biological research needed to manage game -- "Ding" Darling . . .

Since modern game management has been established, with hunting based on biological surpluses of wildlife, no game species in North America has been severely depleted by sporthunting and many species have been brought from scarcity to abundance -- antelope, wild turkey, deer, elk and others. Revenues from sporthunting have also helped preserve wildlife habitat for the benefit of not only game, but for many non-game wildlife species.

The current wave of anti-hunting emotion will eventually spend itself, only to be renewed by future zealots. It's a pity that there is always a fraction seeking to force its morality on another . . .

Wildlife's greatest problem today is not controlled hunting, but uncontrolled use of environment . . .

Instead of wasting our efforts on the propriety of hunting -- which is something like the old theological debate over how many angels can stand on the head of a pin -- we should be working together with all types of wildlife and joining forces against the despoilers of natural environments. There's no better way of putting this than by paraphrasing one of Aldo Leopold's closing comments in *Game Management*:

There is, in short, a fundamental unity of purpose and method between hunters and anti-hunters. Their common task of teaching the public how to modify economic activities for conservation purposes is of infinitely greater importance, and difficulty, than their current differences of opinion over hunting. Unless and until the common task of wildlife conservation is accomplished, the question of hunting is in the long run irrelevant.

--Ed Kozicky and John Madson, from a paper originally presented as part of a panel discussion on hunting and anti-hunting that was held by the student chapter of the Wildlife Society at Louisiana State University, April 1975.

November 1975

Instant Wildlife Habitat

■ For years, wildlife managers have recognized the value of small potholes for wildlife watering places and for waterfowl habitat. It has only been in recent years that high power, low cost, explosives have been used to improve wildlife habitat in wetland areas. Pothole blasting has been carried out effectively on many of our state-owned wildlife areas and on private lands.

Blasting can be used to create small open water potholes in areas which may be too wet for the use of heavy equipment. The cost of blasting a pothole is also much less than that of digging one with earth moving equipment. The cost of the materials necessary to blast one pothole 35 feet in diameter and six feet deep is approximately $30 . . .

--Jim Zohrer, wildlife biologist

Roger Sparks

January 1976

The Costly Results of Dutch Elm Disease

■ Problems are being caused in Iowa's state parks by dead and dying trees in the aftermath of Dutch elm disease. Besides the unsightliness, trees dying of the disease characteristicly drop big branches, causing danger to the public . . .

In 1974, more than 5,500 dead trees were removed from state parks (3,400 trees were replanted). Park rangers and their assistants spent 3,700 hours using chainsaws, cutting mostly smaller elms . . . a number of the trees are too large for park equipment, or are in areas requiring professional services . . .

The disease has been costly to Iowa's state parks both in terms of money and time spent destroying its residues. To remove 200 trees, $4,000 was spent at Dolliver State Park . . . Equipment to remove stumps costs about $10,000 per machine and two of them are in constant use, being transferred from park to park the year 'round . . .

--Roger Sparks, editor

November 1976

Iowa's Little Known $ Million Fur Industry

■ Iowa, known nationally for its multi-million dollar agricultual crop production, receives little or no recognition for its annual million dollar fur crop. In fact, during the 1975-76 fur season, a record 7.4 million dollars worth of fur was harvested by Iowa hunters and trappers . . .

Trappers numbers, based on license sales, reached a peak of nearly 20,000 in 1946-47. This was when native mink pelts peaked at about $50 apiece. Fur hunter numbers remained stable until the mid-1960s at which time their numbers began to increase. Trapper numbers stabilized until the early 1970s at between 6,000 and 10,000 sportsmen. Fur hunter and trapper numbers have been increasing steadily since 1970 because of increasing pelt prices as well as increasing interest in pursuing coyote, fox and raccoon while other upland game hunting has shown declines because of dwindling habitat . . .

. . . [Iowa] ranks about seventh out of the top 10 states as far as total pelts harvested . . .

--Ronald D. Andrews, wildlife biologist

May 1977

The Mississippi River -- A Dying Resource?

■ . . . One day there will be no Mississippi River -- just a ditch. You say you don't believe it? Well, just turn around. Look to the west. You see it? Yes, it's the Missouri "Ditch."

---Don R. Helms, fisheries research biologist

■ **1975**

The Iowa fishing forecast begins as a regular spring feature of the *Iowa Conservationist.*

Trophy Turkey Records are recorded in the *Iowa Conservationist.*

First season for snagging paddlefish is set in Iowa.

Two separate deer hunting seasons are implemented.

■ **1976**

Price of the *Iowa Conservationist* increases in February to $2 for one year, $3 for two years and $5 for four years.

A new State Forest Nursery facility in Ames is completed, using highly mechanized equipment and techniques.

■ **1977**

Saylorville Reservoir opens.

The Ring-necked Pheasant in Iowa book is published by the Iowa Conservation Commission. The 147-page hard bound book is edited by Allen L. Farris, wildlife research biologist, and is available for $5.

Waterfowl hunters in Fremont and Mills counties are required to use steel shot.

Iowa passes its own Endangered Species Act.

Brook trout, Iowa's only native trout, are once again stocked in Iowa streams.

The first Fort Atkinson Rendezvous is held.

Ken Formanek

1978

New Spirit Lake Hatchery addition completed.

Iowa sells ethanol gasoline for the first time.

A law is passed prohibiting the Iowa Conservation Commission from setting a hunting season on mourning doves.

An Eastern cottonwood, owned by Edwin Rusch from Crawford County, is entered in Iowa's Big Tree Registry. The cottonwood just so happens to be Iowa's largest tree with a circumference of 31 feet 4 inches.

A national champion magnolia cucumber tree is registered from Iowa. The tree measures 24 feet 5 inches around and is located at the Good Samaritan Home in Waukon.

Experimental aeration project begins at Black Hawk Lake to prevent winterkill.

1979

William C. Brabham is appointed director of the Conservation Commission.

February 1977

Iowa's Big Opportunity -- A Bottle Bill

. . . It is hardly necessary to point out that most often the litter contains beverage cans or bottles. In fact beverage containers make up from 20 percent to 40 percent of all litter. With this one new law we can cut, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce estimates, between 70 percent and 80 percent of our beverage container litter problems.

. . . Supporters of the bottle bill believe that a national beverage container deposit law could save consumers $1.8 billion annually. Despite all of the publicity about recycling in recent years, we are currently recycling a lower percentage of our nonrenewable resources than ever before in our history. It is my opinion that we should be able to purchase products which can be used over and over again and products that can be produced without unnecessary waste of materials and energy. Some say that this concept would cost many people in the container industry their jobs. Independant studies indicate that contrary to opponent's arguments, a bottle bill projects a net increase of [more than] 100,000 jobs and total labor income increases approaching a billion dollars a year. All this and save the consumer money in addition.

A national bottle bill may someday be a reality but don't count on it happening too soon. What we can do is begin action in this state right now. The people of Iowa should join in an effort to make the bottle bill a top priority objective.

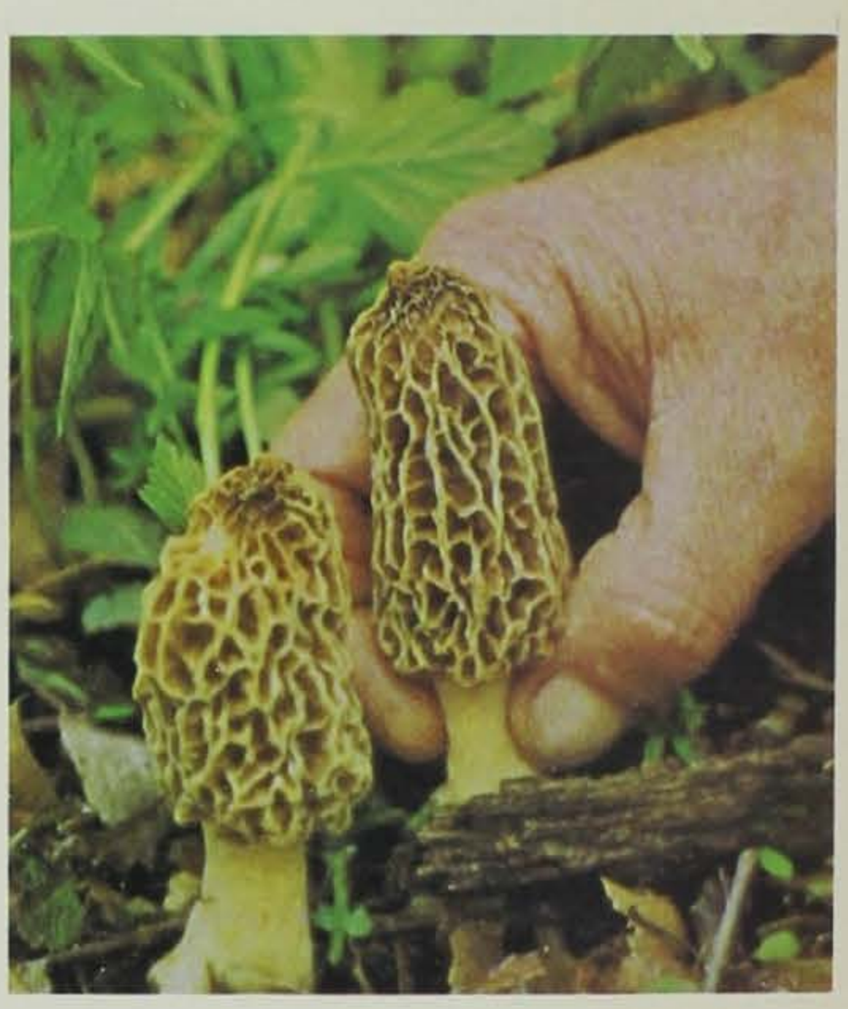
--Fred Priewert, director, Iowa Conservation Commission

November 1978

Timber Resource Disappearing in Iowa

. . . Thirty years ago it was estimated that there were 2.5 million acres of timberland in our state. In a survey in 1974 it was found that only 1.6 million acres remained. Since that survey, thousands of acres have succumbed to the bulldozer. The rate of conversion in the last couple of years has accelerated rather than declined because of the continued inflation of land prices and because of larger and heavier equipment that can clear land much more quickly and more economically than in the past. In many cases this land had not been cleared before because the soil was not considered good enough for farm crops or because the land was so rolling that it was feared that the soil would be lost and a wasteland would result. This land is now being cleared and will pose a serious erosion problem and the water holding capacity of some watersheds will be seriously reduced. The farm owner is likely to clear the land regardless of the cost to the environment because of his economic needs . . .

-- by Robert Grau, private sawmill owner



April 1979

Mushrooms!

. . . Mushroom hunting has become an important recreational activity in the last 15 years due to elms dying from the Dutch Elm disease. The morel is the most common mushroom this time of year and as mushrooms go is quite distinctive and easily recognized . . .

Scientists don't know how morel mushrooms reproduce; that's why they aren't grown commercially. It's kind of nice that there is something in our everyday lives that has an element of mystery.

--Ed Gardiner, district forester

April 1978

Owlsant or Phwl?

■ Conservation Commission wildlife research teams are currently attempting to crossbreed great-horned owls and ringneck pheasants. In the face of declining pheasant habitat, it is thought that the new strain of birds would be able to live both in cornfields and hollow trees.

. . . It is thought that the new bird would be available to those who work days but might like to get out into the field during the evening.

. . . Commission biologists are looking forward to summer when the first owlsants will be stocked. These birds will be released near Aprilfoole, Iowa, in June.

June 1978

A Message on Brushy Creek

■ The concept of developing a recreational lake in Webster County has its roots in the 1960s when the Iowa Conservation Commission and the Iowa Legislature approved a plan with the purpose of acquiring 4,200 acres at Brushy Creek near the town of Duncombe, Iowa. Justification for development of the lake has been based on the lack of major water features in the Webster County area and on the need to provide for unmet public demands for land and water-oriented outdoor recreation activities and programs.

The Conservation Commission officially approved the Brushy Creek Development Master Plan in August of 1976. This action was a public commitment to proceed with the construction of a 980-acre lake and recreation facilities on this area . . .

Brushy Creek Recreation Area is a regional/statewide facility. [More than] 800,000 people live within a 90-mile drive of the site. The facilities and programs offered are not intended to be exclusive to any one user group but rather provide for all reasonable and compatible recreation activities being demanded. Our agency feels that the development of Lake Brushy is an important recreational project and one which should be completed as scheduled.

--Fred A. Priewert, director, Iowa Conservation Commission

April 1979

Return of the Brookies

■ . . . In 1977 were selected two trout streams for stocking brook trout . . . in North Cedar and South Fork Big Mill creeks . . .

We sampled the brook trout in both streams in October 1978 . . . We found high mortality rates for the brook trout in both areas . . . However, growth was exceptionally good and many brook trout reached 12 to 14 inches during their first year in the stream . . .

With cooperation from anglers and continued efforts to control siltation in these streams, we may be able to reestablish brook trout in Iowa. Success of this program would enable Iowa's trout anglers to relive the past as they seek the colorful Iowa brookie.

--Don Degan, fisheries biologist

First Iowa wildlife habitat stamp, designed by Patrick Costello and featuring a pair of Hungarian partridge, sells for $3. The stamp is required by all resident and nonresident hunters. Revenue from the sale of the stamp will go to land acquisition and habitat development.

First nongame support certificate is issued.

Commission adopts a shorter quail season due to the severity of the winter of 1978-79.

Bounties become illegal on all but coyote and gophers. Counties can set bounties on beaver and other pests taken during their respective season.

Clean Lakes Act adopted in Iowa.

Three hundred Hungarian partridge are stocked in southeast Iowa.

The Red Fox in Iowa is published by the Iowa Conservation Commission. The hardbound book sells for $3 and is edited by Ronald D. Andrews, wildlife biologist.

The Columns

WARDEN'S DIARY

The Art of Snowmobile Riding by Chuck Humeston

One item of equipment most conservation officers are issued is a snowmobile.

Now you may think, "Well, that would be nice. That would be a lot of fun." Wrong! Other people seem to have better fortune with the snowmobile than I have. It all started a long time ago.

My first assignment was in northwest Iowa – snow country, yes, snowmobiles. I was just completing training and was in Spirit Lake receiving equipment. Mike Ashby (who is now my supervisor but at the time was the officer assigned) to the lakes area: stated it was time to learn how to ride a snowmobile. I thought: "This is great!"

We went to a storage building and inside were some new Kawasaki 440 Intruders (snowmobiles even have fast names!). I thought, "This is great! Which one is mine?" Mike took me to the back of the room. There, dust-covered and used, sat a Scorpion. It didn't look fast. It just looked evil . . . intimidating. It sort of said, "Ride me if you can." Mike said, "This one is yours." Suddenly, things did not seem so great.

I asked where my snowmobile suit was. "I have one here to loan you," was the answer. I suited up: sat on the Scorpion, and I turned the key – nothing. "You might have to use the pull-start, Chuck." I grabbed the handle and pulled and pulled and pulled and finally collapsed. After a great length of time, a cloud of blue smoke and odd noises, it started. Mike showed me the throttle, the lights, the brakes and the kill switch. "Be careful," he said. "It's top heavy and tips over really easy." This definitely was not great any more!

We rode out onto West Okoboji. This sled felt like it would tip over at any moment. I had a death-grip on the handlebars as I slowly squeezed the throttle. We went down into the road ditch and I promptly tipped over. Mike was very sympathetic – he laughed until he shook!

Well, the wind was blowing snow into a ground blizzard. I could see the orange flag on the back of Mike's sled and that was all. I didn't know which direction was which, and that included up and down. I thought, "I'll just stay on his tail."

Mike knew one speed – wide open. With my face frozen in fear and my hands frozen and white-knuckled, I opened up the Scorpion. That orange flag was suddenly the focus of my life. We toured West Okoboji (even though I couldn't see it). We checked a few anglers that appeared out of the snow then wind out back to the road ditch. I promptly tipped over. Mike did not see it. I hurried to right the sled. I was stuck in snow more. I thought, "If I push on the sled, and give it some throttle, the sled will ride itself out of this before Mike sees me." I pushed on the sled and opened the throttle. The Scorpion immediately shot out of the snow into the road shoulder, and slid across the highway into the ditch on the other side with me falling face-first into the snow as it went out from underneath me. I set digging snow out of my helmet wondering if there was some other line of work I could get into.

Mike noticed I was gone and rode back to me. "What happened? Why is your sled over there?" he asked. He was just much help pushing my sled out of the ditch as he was laughing too hard.

The Scorpion went to the snow sale the next summer. I got my Kawasaki 440 Intruder. I spent a lot of winters on it, and I learned a little more. I learned how hard it is to pull-start a snowmobile while the kill-switch is engaged. I learned about throwing drive belts 10 miles from town in -10°F weather. I learned to strap snow-shoes to my sled. I learned about bouncing on a sled all day long and feeling 5'5" at the end of the day instead of 6'. I learned how great it is to be on river patrol and to round a bend to find nothing but open water. That's the great thing about learning to ride. You can only learn by doing.

■ Throughout the past 50 years, the *Iowa Conservationist* has played host to a number of regular columns. The first issue alone, published in February 1942, contained five -- "Wardens' Tales -- Shop Talk From the Field," "Flick Says," "Conservation in School," "Wild Life Research" and "Forestry Chips." Unfortunately, for reasons known only to past editors and staff, most columns which have appeared in the *Iowa Conservationist* during the past half century, have lasted only a couple of years -- or only a few issues. One column which has remained fairly constant, although written by several authors, is "Warden's Diary."

It will probably come as no surprise to our readers that "Warden's Diary" is also the most popular column in the *Iowa Conservationist*. The forerunner of "Warden's Diary," "Wardens' Tales -- Shop Talk From the Field," debuted in the very first issue and contained anecdotes from conservation officers in the field. "Wardens' Tales" was published through 1959. In 1973, "Warden's Diary" made its debut and has had three conservation officers as authors -- Rex Emerson (1973-81); Jerry Hoilien (1981-89); and Chuck Humeston (1989-present).

Because "Warden's Diary" is the longest-running and most popular column, we have taken the liberty of running exerpts from both "Warden's Diary" and "Wardens' Tales." And, we are also featuring illustrations by Newton "Bud" Burch. Bud, a graphic artist with the state division of printing, was the illustrator of "Warden's Diary" from 1975-91. However, we are also listing below a few of the columns which appeared for several years in the *Iowa Conservationist*. We do, however, regret that we are unable to run excerpts from these columns, as well as others, because of space limitations.

August 1942

Wardens' Tales -- Shop Talk From the Field

■ Conservation officer Jim Gregory was telephoned late one evening by a farmer living alone along a stream in northwest Iowa. He asked Jim to come out to his farm the first thing in the morning to see some crop damage. Jim arrived early and was led to a bottom field that had been flooded and was now a flat stretch of soupy silt and nothing else.

"Look at that potato field, nicely in blossom before it was flooded -- and now just look! I'll settle for $400!"

Startled by the farmer's last statement, Jim asked what had happened.

"Well," said the farmer "when the river came out, the carp came out with the water and ate all the tops off those potatoes and ruined the field."

After catching his breath, the conservation officer explained that the state could not pay claims for damage done by wildlife.

"Well, I thought I'd try, anyway."

--Conservation officer Jim Gregory

"Wednesday Walt Aiken and I were looking over the rearing ponds at Mount Ayr. At one pond we found a throw-line with 11 hooks, baited with chunks of raw pork. Someone was a little previous. Fish in this pond are two weeks old."

--Conservation officer Elden Stempel

"I have had a number of funny incidents with fishermen dipping bullheads when they congregated at the inlet of Spirit Lake. I was in the brush along the grade near the paddle wheel late one night, when a car stopped and someone said, 'Goodbye now.'

"As I watched the paddle wheel, a figure passed and went down to the inlet. The man had just started taking bullheads illegally when something frightened him, and he ran up the grade and down the road. I took out to run him down, and about a block farther on I was within inches of getting him by the collar when he suddenly turned, one of his feet striking one of mine and upsetting us both on the gravel road. I found myself sitting on the fellow's chest.

"He said, 'Mister, you got me. I'm guilty.'

"I felt a little ridiculous holding court sitting on that fellow's chest in the middle of the road in the moonlight."

--Conservation officer Rae Sjostrom

Illustration by Newton Burch

July 1975

Warden's Diary

. . . We had received a tip about two men using an electric shocker to take fish. So this morning at 5:30 one of the officers dropped me off on a tree-covered island in the Cedar River. He took the boat on down the river about a mile and pulled it in behind a fallen tree. About this time I discovered I was located in the healthiest crop of poison ivy I'd ever seen. I had a bag with me containing a raincoat, binoculars, camera, notebook, portable radio and of course a thermos of black coffee.

The river was quietly flowing by. The sounds of nature were all around me. A peewee started singing his song, as well as many other birds that I couldn't identify, while a woodpecker kept time to their music by pecking on a dead tree trunk. Crows called to each other from both sides of the river. Occasionally a carp would flop on the surface of the water. Nature's inhabitants were waking up . . . A few drops of rain started to fall, but the leafy umbrella of the maple trees kept me dry, at least for a while. Then the umbrella started to leak and it was time to get the raincoat out and have another cup of coffee . . .

At 6:15 the sound of an outboard motor made me forget all other sounds around me. The rain had stopped. I could see a boat coming up the river rounding a bend about a quarter mile from me. This was a lonely stretch of river with no cabins or public access . . . there were two men in the boat, one with a green cap and tan shirt running the motor and the other, without any hat, wearing a white tee shirt, the latter was on his knees in the bottom of the boat. At 6:34 I jotted down the boat number. At 6:36 the man with the white tee shirt stopped whatever he was doing, grabbed a long handled dip net and quickly dipped it into the water, but didn't get anything. At 6:37 he blew his nose and got back on his knees. They headed right toward my island and soon I could now see right down into their boat. The man on his knees was turning the crank on a shocker made from an old telephone. He acted like he was trying to call long distance. Two wires ran from it into the water. Just as they passed I snapped a picture.

Over the portable two-way radio I informed the officer in the boat what we had, including a description of the men and the boat number. At 6:59 I heard them open up the throttle on the motor and head back down the river. As soon as they saw the other officer coming toward them, they pitched the shocker into the river. There was no way they could outrun him so they stopped. Of course they denied everything until they were brought back up the river to the island. When I stepped out of the poison ivy with my camera around my neck and told them to smile the next time they were on candid camera, they didn't have much to say. After I took a quick glance at the notebook and told the man in the white tee shirt exactly what time he blew his nose, they were really quiet while the summons were made out.

. . . when the judge looks at them over the top of his glasses and says, "That will be $100 each for attempting to take fish with an illegal device," I doubt very much if they will be interested in trying to get another one . . .

--Rex Emerson

Wildflower of the Month (1959 and 1980-86)

Authors: Iowa Conservationist staff; Dean M. Roosa, state ecologist

Features: Wildflowers found in Iowa's woodlands and prairies, their blooming periods, where they can be found in Iowa and other interesting information.

Campfire Cookery (1968-72)

Author: Dick Ranney, exhibit specialist

Features: Recipes from -- and for -- Iowa's great outdoors. Some past recipes include Campers Chili, Pheasant in Sour Cream, Perfect Cornbread, Wild Goose Apple Stuffing and Spit Barbequed Quail.

April 1987

Warden's Diary--Lending a Helping Hand?

It was a beautiful day in Keokuk. That's about as far south and east as you can go in Iowa, as you know. The sun was shining, the sky was filled with white billowy clouds, and the birds were singing. I felt good! Great day to take a walk down by the waterfront and see what the anglers were doing.

There were a lot of boats on the Mississippi River. Lock and Dam 9 is only a mile from the mouth of the Des Moines River and the Missouri line. There is an old story about how that little tip (the "hangy-down" part) of Iowa got there. Seems there used to be a big rapids there before the dams were built, and when the original surveyors came up the Mississippi River they got confused and turned up the Des Moines for a short distance. By the time they realized their error, they just shot a line going straight west and called everything north Iowa. They then back-tracked to the Mississippi and started north. Now you know how we got that little bump called lower Lee County.

Illustration by Newton Burch

I checked a number of anglers along the rocks below the dam and found myself at the boat dock marina. Some boats were coming into there so I checked a few more as I worked my way down the end of the dock. It was quite a distance, as it used to be a long floating dock. Anyway, there on the very end was a good friend, and I stopped to visit. He was gathering up all his gear and was trying to get it all together so he could make just one trip, but he had too much.

"Let me help," I said, picking up his poles and tackle box. "You get the rest. I'm headed up that way right past your car."

He kept up a constant chatter up the long dock and the flight of stairs and all the way to his car. I set his gear down and waved goodbye. Nice guy, I always enjoyed him. Maybe when I retire I can do like he does and fish everyday.

A couple of weeks later I saw him in a cafe and waved him over to my table.

"Not on your life!" he said. "By the time I got home the last time I saw you, my wife had gotten three calls that I'd been picked up by the game warden and was on my way to jail." Seems he spent the next few days trying to explain it all, but all he got was, "Yeah, yeah, tell that to your wife, maybe she'll believe you. You can't fool us, we saw him take your poles and tackle box -- Ha!"

He laughed and said he'd carry his own gear from now on. He sat down at the counter and grinned. But he bought my coffee.

--Jerry Hoilien

CLASSROOM CORNER

Classroom Corner (1972-present)

Authors: Curt Powell, Conservation Education Center administrator (1972-75); Robert P. Rye, CEC administrator (1975-91); CEC staff (1991-present)

Features: Articles and quizzes on Iowa's environment.

CONSERVATION UPDATE

Conservation Update (1982-present)

Authors: Iowa Conservationist staff

Features: News column featuring current information on natural resource issues in Iowa and throughout the world.

July 1990

Warden's Diary --
Famous Last Words in Boating

Illustration by Newton Burch

■ When it comes to working navigation enforcement, sometimes situations and statements come up that I just do not understand. It makes me wonder if I'm out of sync with the world.

For example, I can buy a $15,000 car which can travel up to 65 miles per hour on some highways, and I have to pass a course of instruction and be licensed in its operation, but I can buy a boat costing just as much and can travel just as fast, and to put it on the water I don't have to know a thing about it.

And why does a great hue and cry arise about drinking and driving in a car until it is legally and socially unacceptable (very simple--it kills!), but drinking and operating a boat seems to be "recreation"? Does it not kill too? I know it does -- I've seen it happen.

I ponder things like this. Am I missing something? Once in a while other things happen on the water leaving me perplexed and scratching my head. Here's one case in point.

A young couple was having a problem sliding their boat off a trailer at a ramp. Motoring up to them, I could see water spewing like Old Faithful into the hull through the drain hole. I jumped into the boat asking, "Where is the plug?" The owner had no idea. I yelled, "Turn on the bilge pump!" The owner had no idea about that either. We were sinking at the ramp.

Running to the bow, I hooked up the winch line and gave a couple of cranks, promptly snapping the line due to the weight of the boat. No matter -- by now the boat had settled solidly on the back half of the trailer. Trying to pull out the boat with the attached car caused the car to skid off the ramp. A good samaritan in a four-wheel-drive hooked on to everything and pulled it out. The owner walked up to me, and said, "Thanks, we just got the boat, and we've never been boating before." Imagine my surprise!

A man who had a pontoon boat with a 9.9 horsepower motor asked, "Do I need to have a fire extinguisher?" I replied not at that horsepower. He said, "I just wondered, we like to go out on the lake, set up the grill and cook a few steaks." I pointed at the two fuel tanks, and asked if it wouldn't be a good idea to take along a fire extinguisher anyway. He agreed, "Yeah, I guess it would."

A boat pulling a water skiier passed me on the Iowa River. I noticed the skiier was wearing a ski belt. Stopping the boat, I waited for the operator to pick up the skiier, and I pointed out that the belt did not meet regulations. The skiier held the belt in front of my face, saying, "Maybe you've never seen one of these before." That's true, I haven't seen one, I've seen hundreds. He told me, "I won't wear a vest. They're too tight." I explained the danger in hanging upside down in the water with a belt wrapped around your legs. Well, he left unhappy, yelling he was going to sell his boat.

A person was riding on the bow. It's perfectly legal, but I have to stop them anyway to point out the danger involved. "But it's fun with the wind blowing in my face." Would it be fun to have the prop run up your back when you fall off? Boats have terrible brakes. I don't get it. Do I just not like to have fun?

Finally, doing a safety check and finding no life jackets, you hear the classic, "We were just going across the lake, besides, we can swim."

Famous last words.

--Chuck Humeston

■ **Nature Tale for Kids (1984-86)**
Author: Dean M. Roosa, state ecologist
Features: Fictional stories for kids -- and adults -- about Iowa's wildlife. Past articles include *Phil, the Ground Squirrel Extraordinaire, Lagica, the Not-So-Swift Chimney Swift,* and *The Mouse that Snored.*

■ **County Conservation Board Feature (1985-present)**
Authors: County conservation board staff
Features: Articles on county conservation board areas, naturalist programs and historical pieces. Past articles include *A Visit With Woman of the Woods, Canoeing the Turkeyfoot* and *Our Sod Heritage.*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TRAINING

The 1980s: Joining Forces

August 1986

. . . A basic principle of reorganization is that agencies with similar functions could be consolidated into one agency and provide the same services with fewer personnel . . .

The Department of Natural Resources is a good example of agency consolidation. The Iowa Conservation Commission, the Department of Water, Air and Waste Management, the Iowa Geological Survey Bureau, and the Energy Policy Council have been combined to form the new department . . .

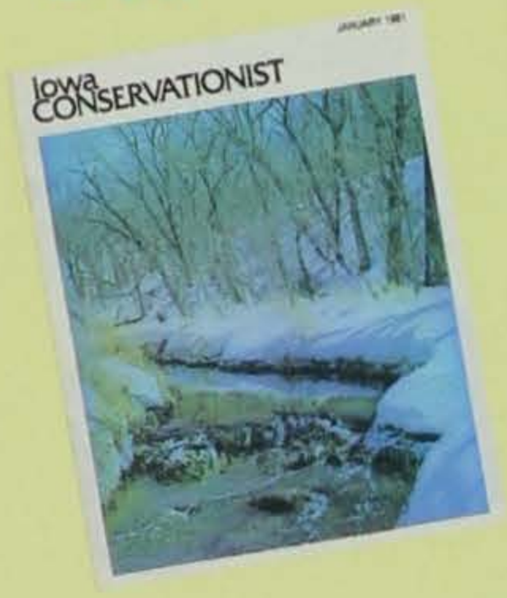
The mission of the Department of Natural Resources is to ensure the proper management and protection of Iowa's natural resources while actively encouraging public use and enjoyment of Iowa's resources in a manner consistent with sound management principles . . .

■ **1980**

Robert Fagerland is appointed acting director of the Conservation Commission, upon the death of William Brabham.

In an effort to increase nesting cover for ring-necked pheasants, the Conservation Commission offers a cost-share program to farmers for establishing switchgrass pastures.

■ **1981**



Iowa Conservationist has a new nameplate

Larry J. Wilson is appointed director of the Conservation Commission.

First fall turkey season in Iowa is held -- 1,843 hunters take 813 birds.

Record year for Iowa furs -- $15.5 million changes hands between hunters, trappers and fur buyers.

The Iowa Natural Areas Inventory is formed within the Conservation Commission. The program is aimed at organizing and storing, in one place, information about rare plants and

March 1980

It's More Than Just Their First Fishing Trip -- Molding Your Child's Future

■ There's no better place for the first fishing trip than a pond that's overstocked with bluegills or sunfish. Children need to have their enthusiasm kept up, and bluegills or sunfish will certainly do that. Size of the fish isn't important to a child, but "catching fish" is. . . . A small child doesn't care if he's fishing with a hundred dollar fishing outfit or sitting on the bank with a cane pole. A youngster is only interested in having the opportunity, and sharing it with a concerned and caring parent . . .

If you can find the time and want to improve your relationship with your children, take them fishing. Better yet, make the time -- it will be more than just your child's first fishing trip.

-- by Bob Mullen, conservation officer

Ron Johnson

March 1980

Pecans Which Grow in the North

■ Although many people recognize the pecan as a tree of the South, relatively few are aware that it is also a tree of the North. Today an interested explorer can find native stands of pecan along the Missouri River in north-central Missouri and along the Mississippi River near Dubuque, Iowa.

May 1980

The Praeri Rail Trail -- Seventeen Kilometers (10.5 miles) of Fortuitous Undertaking

■ The spelling of "praeri" is correct. The Norwegian spelling of prairie is in recognition of the Scandinavian influence on northern Story County and also a reflection of the firm Nordic position which the Story County Conservation Board had to take to acquire the vacated Chicago and North Western railroad line between Roland and Zearing. Acquiring an abandoned railroad line in the modern agricultural expanse of rural Iowa is a challenge to any conservation agency in the late twentieth century . . . The economic plight of financially troubled railroads in Iowa has or will make available [more than] 1,000 miles of rail line in the 1980s. Keeping portions of such lands in public trust will require an all-out effort on the part of conservation agencies, political bodies and individuals. Such acquisitions can be accomplished, but it will take hard work and a lot of cooperation . . .

Iowa needs to look closely at its heritage, the need for public open space and the need for wise land use. Putting abandoned railroad lines back into grainfields versus public acquisition for conservation/recreation use lends itself to a healthy debate. The public value of keeping some rail lines in trust may far outweigh any economic value of putting such land back into grain production. Such values would be expressed in existing wildlife habitat, use of right of way for future utilities, transportation corridors, and public recreation. Iowa has less than two percent of its lands in public trust. Our fields are the bread basket of the nation and the world. We need to utilize those lands wisely so food and fiber continue to flow in abundance from our bountiful state. We, however, must always be aware of the need to share such lands wisely with the wildlife. Fencelines have disappeared, as well as farm woodlots in northern and central Iowa. Abandoned railroads may offer one of the few sanctuaries to [wildlife], second only to our road ditches in some areas of the state . . .

--Robert R. Pinneke, director, Story County Conservation Board and Loren E. Rierson, board member

July 1981

Clean Lakes for Iowans

Clear water . . . blue reflections . . . a healthy aquatic environment. These are qualities everyone wants in a lake. So, several state agencies are participating in a program to help provide these characteristics in Iowa. The Clean Lakes Program is a project involving several federal and state agencies in a cooperative effort to improve those Iowa lakes with potentially high public use which are currently plagued with water quality problems . . .

The Clean Lakes Program has its roots in the federal Clean Water Act. This act allows the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help fund state efforts to restore problem lakes. Among initial requirements mandated by the EPA is that each state complete an inventory of its lakes. This inventory includes comprehensive information concerning present water quality, watershed characteristics, biological condition, siltation level, present public use and potential post-restoration public use . . .

In the final phase of the Clean Lakes Program, known as the implementation phase, restoration work is completed. Which restoration efforts are performed will depend upon the problems of each individual lake. Many lakes in Iowa are marred by excessive soil and nutrient runoff from their watersheds. The Department of Environmental Quality and the Iowa Department of Soil Conservation cooperate in restoring such lakes by reducing soil erosion through the use of wise soil management techniques in the watershed . . .

Many lakes are too shallow. Restorative efforts deepen such lakes, either by raising the water level or through excavation and dredging . . .

Another restorative technique is mechanical aeration of a lake. This can help prevent winter fish kills. Renovation of the fish population is often a part of lake restoration. This management technique requires removal of all fish from the lake and restocking the lake with large numbers of the most desirable gamefish species . . .

--Daniel R. Landon

September 1981

A Message from the Director of the Iowa Conservation Commission

. . . We are losing our resource heritage in Iowa at an alarming rate.

Woodlands once covering nearly 20 percent of Iowa are now reduced to only four percent. With expansion of ag-production, the trend toward wood for fuel, and other development pressures, the prognosis of the forest and its associated environment is bleak.

Iowa was once 85 percent prairie environment (totaling 30 million acres). Now, only several thousand acres remain with less than 3,000 acres under any type of protection.

Iowa's six million acres of wetlands have been reduced to a remnant of 70,000 acres.

More than 5,000 miles of natural stream has been eliminated or impacted by straightening.

Through soil erosion, Iowa's topsoil has been reduced from an average of 12-16 inches to an average of 6-8 inches.

Throughout the state, flora and fauna are declining. Certain birds, fish, animals, plants and ecological communities are already gone forever from our state.

Iowa's irreplaceable archaeological resources have been drastically reduced through land development and use; destroying our only link with the prehistoric human element of our natural world.

. . . We are at a critical point in time. It is really a "now or never" situation. We must ask ourselves some rather hard questions --

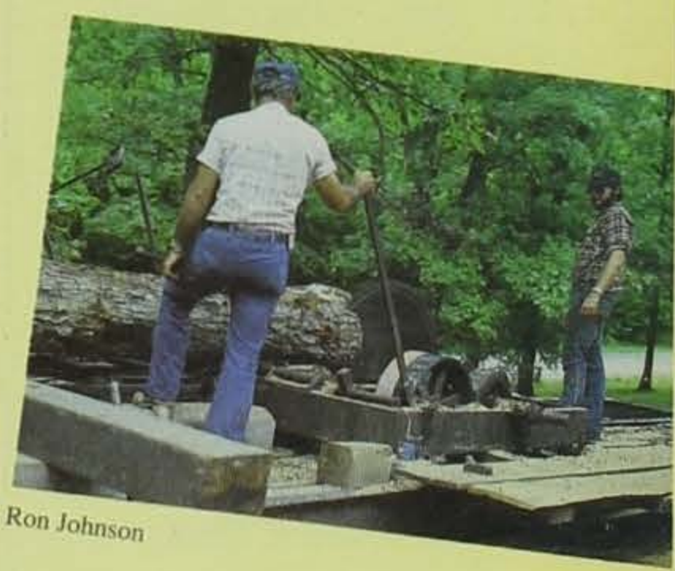
. . . Iowans have enjoyed an unusually high standard of living due mainly to our rich natural resource base. We should care enough to ensure an equal standard of living for future Iowans. Ensuring this future is a major challenge for all Iowans; one which we must come to grips with in the 80s.

--Larry J. Wilson, director, Iowa Conservation Commission

animals, remnant tracts of native vegetation and special geological features.

American hunting was saved by a way of thinking, by the idea of achieving a biological balance in which hunting harvests no more than the annual surplus of a game population. Figuring out what that surplus is, and how to increase and sustain it, is what scientific game management is all about. Such management is the newest part of our hunting heritage, and the most important. Maybe it isn't as colorful as the old buckskin traditions we grew up with -- but without it there'll be no buckskin in the years ahead, and no place for the traditions of free hunters.

--"Our Hunting Heritage," *by John Madson, October 1981*



Ron Johnson

First Forest Crafts Festival is held at Lacey-Keosauqua State Park in Van Buren County. Hybrid bass, better known as wipers, are stocked in Saylorville Reservoir.

■ 1982

Slough Bill provides incentives for landowners to preserve wetlands, forests and grasslands. The bill exempts wild lands from taxation as long as they meet certain requirements and are not used for economic gain.

The 50th anniversary reunion of Iowa's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) is held in July at Springbrook Education Center. In Iowa, the CCC employed more than 49,000 workers between 1933 and 1942. They planted 6.4 million trees, built 737,000 rods of fence, collected 880,000 pounds of hardwood seeds, controlled tree diseases on almost two million acres, and constructed countless stone/log shelters, cabins, trails, roads and more.

Iowans can contribute, for the first time, a portion of their tax refund directly to Iowa's Nongame Program. How? Through the Chickadee Checkoff on their state income tax return.

Conservation Commission receives 23 original Ding Darling etchings valued at more than $32,000.

State parks begin using self-registration in campgrounds.

■ 1983

A new environmental education program for Iowa teachers, *Outlook*, is announced by former

August 1984

Why Steel Shot in Iowa?

■ Each year waterfowl hunters in the United States deposit [more than] 3,000 tons of lead shot in the environment. Much of this shot falls on areas where ducks and geese feed. Most lead pellets are the size of grit or of seeds that are preferred foods, and they are picked up by waterfowl as they feed . . .

It has been estimated that two to three percent of the fall waterfowl population in North America, or about two million birds, die each year from lead poisoning . . .

The only practical way to reduce lead poisoning losses is to reduce the amount of lead shot deposited on waterfowl areas, and we can do that by switching to nontoxic steel shot . . .

Perhaps there was a time when we could tolerate the waste of a large number of waterfowl to lead poisoning, but that time is past. The loss of habitat in all parts of the flyway only places more emphasis on unnecessary lead poisoning losses. These losses can and must be reduced. Even though lead poisoning is not as destructive to waterfowl as habitat losses, it is something we can more easily control. And the remedy is also something to which we can all contribute . . .

--James Hansen, waterfowl biologist

December 1982

Officers in the Air -- Aerial Surveillance Catches Nighttime Poachers

■ From the air at night, officers can see spotlighters for miles. With radio communications to vehicles on the ground, the copilot can accurately direct officers to the scene of the crime for the arrest. The State Highway Patrol provides the pilot and the airplane and some ground assistance to Conservation Commission officers who coordinate the effort. Aerial nighttime surveillance is proven effective. In a past year's experiment, one flight resulted in almost 50 arrests of poachers and other offenders. While fines for poaching have not increased in recent years, civil damages have risen dramatically as a result of a law passed in the 1982 Legislature. The charge for civil damages assessed on each deer taken illegally is $750; $200 for each turkey; and most furbearers are $100 each . . .

July 1984

Will Iowa's Wetlands be Lost to the Purple Tide?

■ Wildlife managers in the northeast and north-central regions of the United States are facing a difficult new problem in the management of wetlands. A plant threatens to invade marshes and lakeshores, reducing the potential production of wildlife . . .

The silent danger is purple loosestrife, *Lythrum salicaria*. A native of Europe, this plant has become a serious problem across a large portion of North America . . . It caused few problems until the 1930s when reclamation projects apparently aided its establishment in wetlands. It now grows luxuriantly on river banks, pond margins and throughout marshes . . .

Purple loosestrife has been reported in an increasing number of sites in Iowa. Unless action is taken, our wetlands could disappear under the Purple Tide . . .

--Linda Gucciardo, intern, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

September 1983

Canada Geese -- Management and Hunting in Iowa

■ Giant Canada geese originally nested in Iowa, but due to loss of habitat and unrestricted hunting, wild nesting Canadas no longer existed in the state by about 1907. The Iowa Conservation Commission began reestablishing giant Canada geese in 1964, when 16 adult pairs of pinioned geese were bought from private goose raisers in Minnesota and South Dakota. These geese were released at Ingham Lake in Emmett County in a large enclosure.

. . . giant Canada goose flocks were started in the early 1970s in northern Iowa at Smith's Slough near Ruthven, Kettleson's Hogsback near Spirit Lake and at Rice Lake near Lake Mills. Efforts were made from 1976 to 1981 to establish nesting giant Canada goose flocks in southern Iowa, at Rathbun Reservoir, Green Valley, Bays Branch, Lake Icaria and Red Rock Reservoir. The flock near Rathbun was substantially increased in 1980 and 1981 when interested citizens volunteered to transport nearly 2,000 surplus Canada geese from Toronto, Ontario, Canada . . .

--James Hansen


Ken Formanek

January 1983

Cedar Rock Popular Attraction

■ This fall, more than 8,000 people visited Cedar Rock, the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home and grounds recently donated to the Iowa Conservation Commission. Located near Quasqueton, the home was built between 1948 and 1950 for Lowell and Agnes Walter . . . Cedar Rock is one of the most complete designs Frank Lloyd Wright created. . .

January 1984

Survey Confirms Sharp Increase in Home Woodburning

■ A Forest Service survey confirms that stoves, fireplaces and furnaces in American homes now burn more wood than at any time since World War II. In 1981, residential wood-burning required 42 million standard cords, which is four to five times the amount that was burned 10 years ago. It is about one-fourth of the amount of wood used for all other wood products in the U.S. and is enough wood to make a wall 8 feet wide by 44 feet high, stretching from Washington, D.C. to San Francisco.

. . . The results show that one-fourth of all U.S. households burned fuelwood in 1981 and that three-fourths of all the fuelwood used was cut by homeowners who found it within short distances of their homes . . .

--Kenneth E. Skog, USDA research forester

February 1985

The Park User Fee -- A Second Chance for Iowa's Recreational Areas

■ Most states (33) including all of our neighbors except Illinois and Missouri have already gone to some type of user fee. And, although there are a variety of ways to administer the system, the most popular approach involves the use of a vehicle sticker which is offered on either an annual or daily basis.

Perhaps the biggest and most obvious advantage of implementing a user fee system is that it would generate a reliable source of income with which to repair or replace deteriorating park facilities . . .

One of the most important questions concerning the user fee issue is exactly how palatable would the system prove for those individuals who would pick up the tab? During a recent public survey, the commission learned that 67 percent of all park users said they approved the concept . . .

Other groups of Iowans which pay special user fees include hunters and fishermen, who support their forms of

recreation through the purchase of licenses and stamps. For these sportsmen, the equity of user fees is evident when considering the success of the management programs involving trout, Canada geese, wild turkeys and others. For the park user, it should be easy to envision the possibilities of implementing a fee system that would parallel the support currently given to our state's fish and game programs.

--Lowell Washburn, information specialist

Governor Robert Ray and Governor Terry Branstad.

Mandatory hunter safety education law goes into effect. Any person born after January 1, 1967, who wishes to purchase a hunting license, must successfully pass the course.

Paul Bridgford takes top honors in all three Iowa stamp contests -- duck, trout and habitat.

Governor proclaims the first Prairie Heritage Week.

First roadside kestrel nest boxes are erected along Iowa's Interstate 35.

Anyone born after July 1, 1965, must take and pass a snowmobile certification course before they can legally operate a snowmobile on public land or ice.

■ **1984**

State-wide fishing report is available by a recorded phone message.

National attention is focused on Des Moines July 2 when the U.S. Postal Service first issues a 20-cent commemorative stamp honoring the 50th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act.

Cedar Valley Nature Trail is dedicated. The 52-mile trail joining Cedar Rapids and Waterloo is an abandoned railroad converted for walking, biking, jogging, skiing and education.

■ 1985

The first calendar issue of the *Iowa Conservationist* is published.

The Conservation Commission marks its 50th anniversary.

The Conservation Commission proposes a state forest in Monona and Harrison counties. The Loess Hills Pioneer State Forest will require the acquisition of 17,190 acres of land over a period of many years.

Turn In Poachers program begins. It is a program that allows private citizens to report fish and game violations anonymously, with possible financial rewards.

Steel shot is required on county, state and federal lands in Iowa for hunting migratory birds, with the exception of woodcock. The steel shot requirement is an effort to reduce lead poisoning of ducks and geese.

Coyote and groundhog can be hunted with either a hunting or a fur harvester license.

Ric Rac Raccoon chosen as the new mascot for Iowa's state parks and recreation areas.

August 1986

Editorial: The New DNR

■ Change, accepted by some, resisted by others, has been the theme at the State Capitol Complex the last 10 months. Beginning with Governor Branstad's September proposal to restructure state government in Iowa, through the analysis and remodeling of a consultant's report by various implementation teams, and finally ending with a reorganization bill signed by Governor Branstad on May 29, 1986, the effort was completed. It officially took effect July 1 . . .

A basic principle of reorganization is that agencies with similar functions could be consolidated into one agency and provide the same services with fewer personnel . . .

The Department of Natural Resources is a good example of agency consolidation. The Iowa Conservation Commission, the Department of Water, Air and Waste Management, the Iowa Geological Survey Bureau, and the Energy Policy Council have been combined to form the new department . . .

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources is to ensure the proper management and protection of Iowa's natural resources while actively encouraging public use and enjoyment of Iowa's resources in a manner consistent with sound management principles . . .

Conservationists, environmentalists and outdoor users have generally been solid supporters of these individual agencies. We all need your continued support and encourgement as we move into the new era of the Department of Natural Resources.

--Larry J. Wilson, director, Department of Natural Resources

September 1986

New Program Will Boost Wildlife

■ . . . The Food Security Act of 1986 (Farm Bill) has a provision to take highly erodible cropland out of production for 10 years. This is called the Conservation Reserve Program. If the land had been farmed two out of five years during the period 1981 through 1985 and met certain erosion criteria, a farmer could bid a dollar amount that he would take annually to remove the land from production for 10 years. Acres that qualified for the program are required to be seeded down to a grass-legume mixture, native grasses or planted to trees. A total of 10,835,000 acres of erodible land was eligible in Iowa, and the farm program would allow a maximum of 476,000 acres to be signed up during the first year. Following the initial year, the potential of a million acres a year could be signed up for the next four years. A total of 186,623 acres were bid by farmers during the first year, but only 101,609 acres were accepted by the Department of Agriculture. Those that were not accepted were rejected because the bids, according to officials, were too high. The top bids accepted ranged from $65 per acre in southern Iowa to $90 per acre in northern Iowa during the first sign-up for 1986, and $70 to $90 during the second bidding period. The national goal is to sign up 40 to 45 million acres over a five-year period. Hopefully, Iowa will come close to its potential of 4,476,000 acres.

In addition to the Conservation Reserve Program, the annual farm program required farmers to idle 20 percent of their 1986 corn acreage to be eligible for farm support payments. A high percentage of farmers participated in the annual program resulting in a large acreage being taken out of corn production. These acres require a cover crop which in most cases was oat seeding. The potential for nesting pheasants, if managed right, is substantial . . .

To summarize, we have higher numbers of pheasants and the potential for several million acres of nesting cover. The present limiting factor in much of northern Iowa is safe winter cover. The time is right and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources wants to capitalize on this opportunity to increase pheasant numbers in places where adequate habitat has been lacking. Restricting hunting seasons or stocking pheasants is not the answer. It has been too expensive in the past to pay for nesting cover, but the farm program has opened that door . . .

--Richard A. Bishop, chief, wildlife bureau

August 1986

Superfund Cleanup Continues at Iowa's Aidex Site

■ The thousands of rusted, leaking barrels of pesticide waste are now gone . . . The thousands of gallons of poisonous orange liquid have been removed from the open, contrete-lined pit. And by late this fall, environmental officials will hardly be able to recognize the Aidex hazardous waste site, which they once described as being "possibly the worst environmental threat to the state of Iowa."

State environmental officials first became aware of the problem in 1976, when a fire destroyed part of the Aidex Corporation's pesticide formulation plant, about seven miles southeast of Council Bluffs. The company's operation involved mixing the concentrated active ingredients of various pesticides with inert material to produce the commercial products that are packaged for sale to the public. The building that burned contained at least 19,000 gallons of liquid pesticides, many of which spread around the site with the water that was used to extinguish the flames. But the fire was just part of the Aidex problem.

The company had been storing its pesticide wastes in barrels that were left stacked outside the buildings, exposed to the elements. Many of the 3,300 barrels of pesticide waste scattered around the

Larry Kolczak

property had rusted through or were swelled and leaking. Also, an estimated one million pounds of insecticide had been buried in shallow trenches on the site . . .

The total cost for cleaning up the Aidex site is expected to be about $8.45 million . . . Without the help of the federal Superfund program, this cleanup might never have been possible. But the Aidex site is just the beginning. There are 12 more hazardous waste sites in Iowa that are currently listed or proposed for the national priority list of sites that might need to be cleaned up under Superfund.

-- Larry Kolczak, environmental specialist

October 1986

Leaking Underground Storage Tanks -- An Environmental Time Bomb

■ Tony Atherton is convinced. Leakage from underground gasoline tanks is an environmental time bomb. For Atherton, that bomb exploded on June 6, 1984. When the smoke and dust cleared, the business that had been in his family since 1941 had been totally destroyed.

The Atherton "66" gasoline station at 29th and Broadway in Council Bluffs was a concrete block building with a basement under the office side. From what investigators were later able to piece together, gasoline had leaked out of at least one of the station's three underground tanks, seeped down through the soil to the water table, and spread out across the surface of the groundwater. When heavy spring rains caused the water table to rise, the moisture that began seeping into the station's basement carried gasoline in with it. The fumes eventually reached explosive levels and were touched off by a spark from the air compressor that controlled the lift . . .

Both the U.S. Congress and the Iowa Legislature have passed laws regulating underground storage tanks. The first step was the requirement for owners to register their tanks, but soon there will be requirements designed to detect and contain leakage before it can cause serious problems.

"It is certainly in the best interest of the tank owner to have an early warning system," says [Pete] Hamlin [chief of the DNR's air and hazardous waste protection bureau] . . .

--Larry Kolczak

In an attempt to restore river otters to Iowa, the state receives a shipment of 16 otters from Louisiana. The otters were purchased by Kentucky, who received 32 turkeys, in trade, from Iowa.

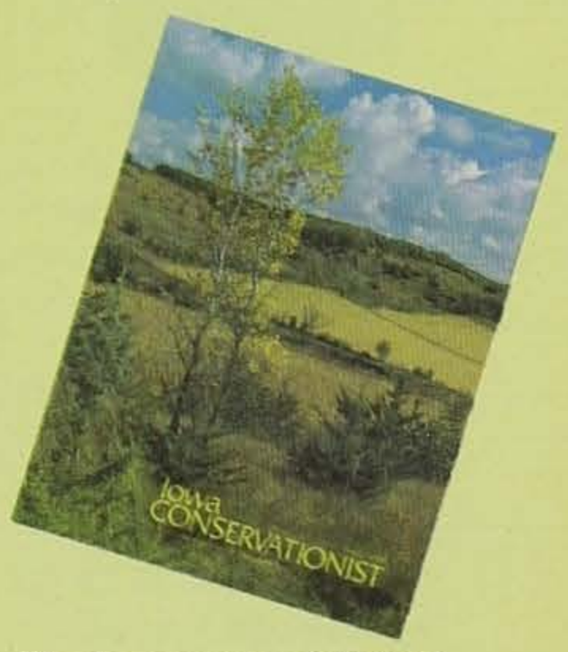
A butterfly sanctuary is planted in Bellevue State Park.

The largest Scotch pine in the United States can be found in Nevada in Story County. The pine measures 60 feet in height with a circumference of 16 feet, three inches and a spread of 65 feet.

Iowa's first Bald Eagle Appreciation Day is held in Keokuk.

■ 1986

The subscription price for the *Iowa Conservationist* is $6 for one year or $12 for three years.



The Department of Natural Resources is formed by combining the Iowa Conservation Commission, Department of Water, Air and Waste Management, Iowa Geological Survey Bureau, and Energy Policy Council.

The state park user fee is implemented. The daily

permit is $2; an annual permit is $10.

U.S. anglers annually spend an estimated $885 million on their sport.

The 100th anniversary of Aldo Leopold's birth is celebrated at Iowa State University. The Department of Natural Resources is a sponsor.

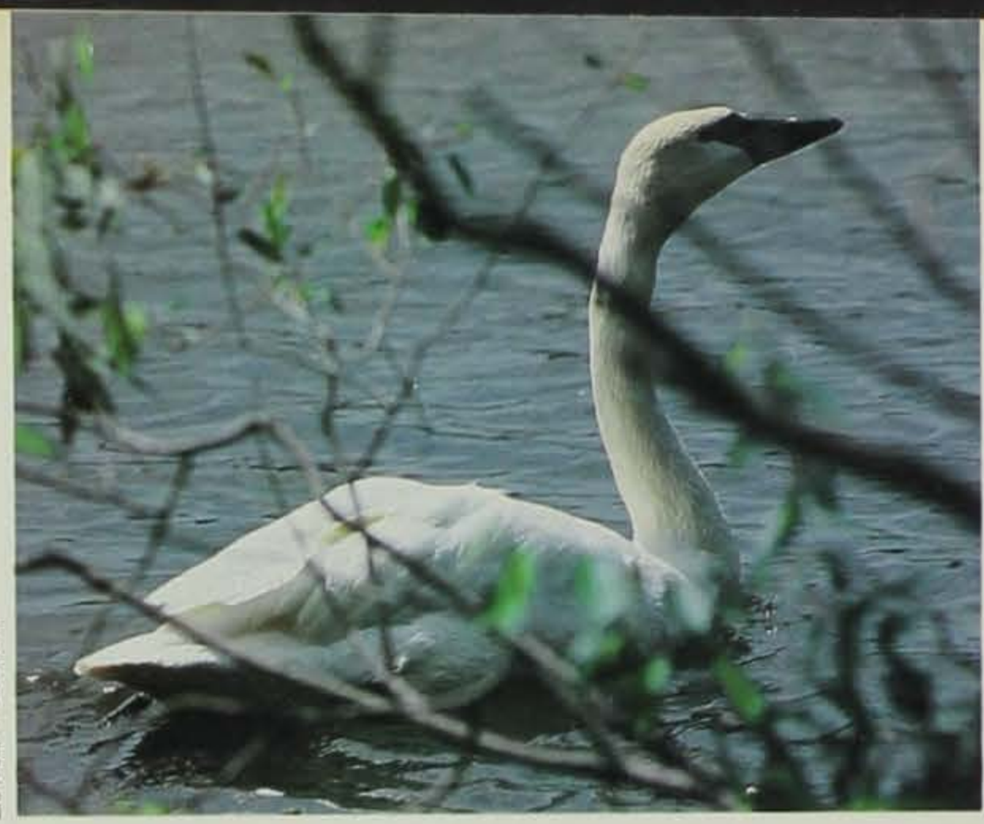
Halley's Comet passes earth, the first time in 76 years. The next siting will be in the year 2062.

First Iowa toxic cleanup day events are held in Dubuque and Cedar Rapids.

■ 1987
The department adopts a new logo.

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act marks its 50th anniversary. Signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt on September 2, 1937, the act was dubbed the Pittman-Robertson Act, after its two sponsors, Senator Key Pittman of Nevada and Representative Willis Robertson of Virginia. It was, in effect, an idea that would become more popular during our current time -- a "user pay" program, with sportsmen footing the bill to conserve the wildlife they enjoy.

First year that all waterfowl hunters are required



Lowell Washburn

With trumpeter swan numbers prospering, wildlife enthusiasts are hopeful that the term "swan song" will adopt a new meaning -- marking not the passing, but rather the triumph of the world's most majestic waterfowl species.

April 1987
Swan Song

■ Legend has it that during its final moments of life, a dying swan sends forth a low and melodious lament to commemorate its passing. The ancient Greeks are said to have first described this so-called "swan song"; and whether or not the phenomena actually exists has been the subject of a centuries-long debate that continues until this day. But regardless of the legend's credibility, there is little disputing that the day-to-day vocalizations of these magnificent birds certainly rank among nature's most unforgettable sounds . . .

A half century ago, the world came dangerously close to losing its trumpeter swans. When only about 1,000 birds were tallied during a 1930's survey, it did appear, at least in a figurative sense, as if this magnificent creature was indeed singing its swan song . . .

Today, however, conservationists have a much brighter outlook on what the future may hold for America's trumpeters . . .

--Lowell Washburn, information specialist

May 1987

The Day the River Died

■ In many ways she had been unique. In fact, most folks would have been hard pressed to come up with adjectives to adequately describe her quiet grace and elegant beauty. For as long as anyone could remember, she had been held in the highest regard; and around towns like Northwood and Rock Falls, she had even enjoyed something of a celebrity status.

Consequently, it was no wonder that the news of her sudden illness spread like wildfire through that neck of the woods. The disease progressed rapidly and her former vitality quickly faded. At the news of her passing, entire communities mourned. Her name was the Shell Rock -- a river which from her source at Lake Albert Lea, Minnesota, twists southward into Iowa flowing for approximately 85 miles and touching six of the state's north-central counties before emptying into the West Fork of the Cedar River near Cedar Falls . . .

A direct victim of the irresponsible disposal of municipal and industrial wastes, the Shell Rock of the 1980s had become a vile conduit whose only apparent purpose was the sluffing away of raw sewage. Her fragrance had been replaced by a stench so unbearable that at communities such as Northwood, it was said to burn the eyes . . .

It would have been easy for the saga of the Shell Rock River to end here; a monument to mankind's short-sighted exploitation of his environment and a mute testimonial to the profound consequences that accompany such abuses.

Fortunately, however, the tale does not end here. And what has happened along the Shell Rock since the day the river died has become a positive and classic example of what can be accomplished once the ecological apple cart has been upset. But it is also a grim reminder of what those accomplishments can cost . . .

--Lowell Washburn

August 1987

Endangered Groundwater? New Strategies for Protecting Iowa's Underground Water Supplies

■ As a boy growing up in Wisconsin, I remember family trips "up north" to our cottage on the lake. When we would finally arrive, my brother and I would race to the old hand pump attached to the sandpoint. Anxiously, we would wait for my father to get the water from home out of the trunk so we could prime the pump and be the first to drink from the mug on the nail. I remember the sweet taste of the drink and my belief that this surely must be nature's purest water. I also recall my disappointment several years later when, as an adult, I had the well water tested. It failed badly and the well was soon replaced.

Many Iowans have been aware for years of the dangers of bacterial contamination of shallow wells. We have known, too, that nitrates, which can enter the soil from certain plants and from farm fertilizers, have been commonly found in wells and their concentrations have been increasing steadily. But few of us were prepared for the results of testing for a variety of synthetic organic compounds in well water.

The growing diversity of contamination has created a new sense of urgency around the need for a plan to protect the groundwater on which so many Iowans rely as their only source of drinking water . . . In January 1987 the Iowa Groundwater Protection Strategy was presented to the Legislature. That strategy, or "blue book" as it has come to be known, was the result of considerable research and input from a wide variety of sources . . .

When the strategy was presented to the General Assembly, it was well received. Included with it were legislative proposals which were taken directly into the body of the resulting legislative plan. Through many weeks of legislative debate and compromises, the Groundwater Protection Act was eventually passed and signed in June by Governor Branstad. Many of its provisions took effect July 1.

The goal statement and policies stated in the Act are the keys to understanding it. Basically, it calls on the state to protect the quality of groundwater in every way it can. The focus is on prevention of contamination. Where it is necessary, the restoration of contaminated areas is required. But, there is also a commitment to dealing with spills, leaks and other contamination in a positive way. Iowa will not be satisfied with a program that allows the state's groundwater to degrade any further. The basic tools to accomplish the provisions of the Act are research, demonstration and education . . .

The Groundwater Protection Act calls for all Iowans to adopt new attitudes and behaviors, along with a new spirit of cooperation to help protect groundwater . . .

--J. Edward Brown, state water coordinator

August 1987

Unearthing Ancient Amphibians

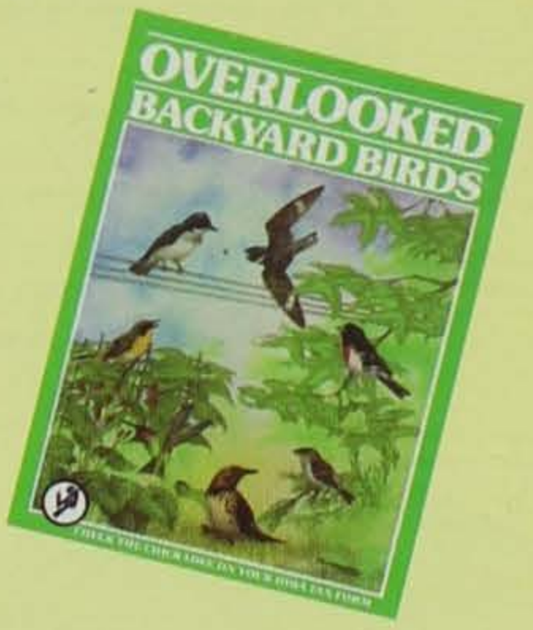
■ Abundant Mississippian-age (320 to 360 million years old) amphibian and fish fossils were discovered in 1985 in a quarry near Delta, Keokuk County. At right is a view of a partial amphibian skeleton showing vertebrae and attached ribs. The fossil amphibian material represents the oldest known tetrapods, four-footed animals, in North America and some of the oldest known in the world.

Robert McKay

to use steel shot throughout the state when hunting migratory game birds other than woodcock.

The first free fishing days are held in Iowa.

The first Chickadee Checkoff poster is available. It features "Overlooked Backyard Birds" by artist James Landenberger of Cedar Rapids.



Forty prairie chickens are released in Iowa. The birds were obtained from Kansas in a three-state swap of wildlife in which Iowa provided turkeys to Michigan, while Michigan provided geese to Kansas.

The first recreational safety officers are hired by the department.

DNR personnel and more than 100 wildlife enthusiasts plant approximately 30,000 wild celery buds in seven public areas located in north-central Iowa counties in an effort designed to aid in the restoration of declining populations of canvasback ducks.

First successful attempt at raising and stocking

saugeye in Iowa's waters takes place with 1.05 million fry and 81,150 small fingerlings being produced.

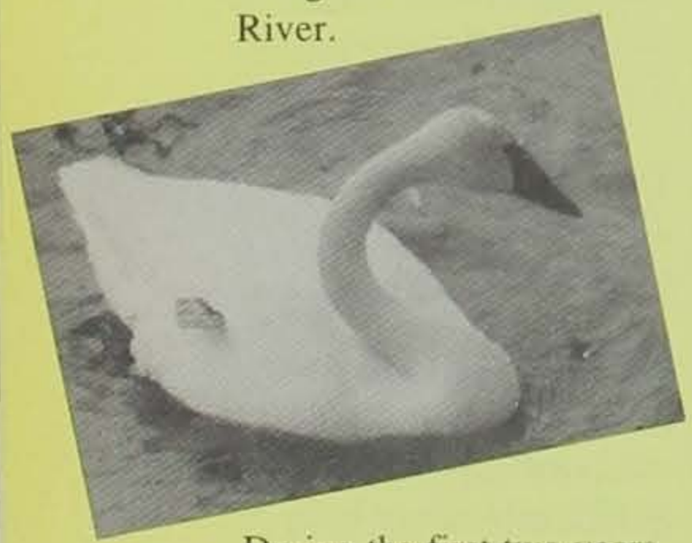
In the cornfields of southwest Carroll County, just outside the town of Halbur on the farm of Edward and Marie Eischeid, an oil drilling rig begins probing for a different Iowa crop -- petroleum. At 15,000 feet, it is the deepest well ever drilled in Iowa.

■ **1988**

Terrace Hill, the governor's mansion in Des Moines, is certified as a backyard wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation.

Newly designed signs pointing the way to Iowa's state parks and recreation areas begin appearing along state highways.

Four trumpeter swans from Minnesota are seen in the Des Moines area along the Des Moines River.



During the first two years of the Iowa Lottery, nearly $3 million is directed to a variety of outdoor recreation and conservation projects.

■ **1989**

Iowa Conservationist is printed on recycled paper,

August 1987

North American Waterfowl Management Plan -- A Strategy for Cooperation

■ In May of 1986, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Don Hodel and Canadian Environment Minister Tom McMillan met in Washington, D.C., to cosign a document called the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The plan is a multi-agency, international approach designed to reverse the continent-wide destruction of wetland habitats and offers a clearly defined set of goals and objectives deemed necessary to increase and restore duck populations from their current all-time low levels.

A strategy for cooperation, the North American Plan runs through the year 2000. Simply stated, it is a blueprint for the most colossal waterfowl recovery program ever attempted. Long story short -- it represents the best news for migratory birds since the creation of the duck stamp, and that may be an understatement.

Although continued research and management efforts are certainly important components, the plan places its greatest emphasis on the enhancement and protection of waterfowl habitat in both the U.S. and Canada. One of the most ambitious proposals is to change the land use practices on 3.6 million acres of prairie Canada currently being farmed, as well as to preserve an additional million plus acres of breeding grounds in the U.S. The agreement further calls for the protection of 886,000 acres of waterfowl migrating and wintering habitat, including more than 680,000 acres of mallard and pintail wintering grounds along the lower Mississippi River and Gulf Coast regions. The price tag? A cool $1.5 billion . . .

--Lowell Washburn, information specialist

November 1988

The Big Spring Project

■ Imagine a large, one-acre outdoor laboratory. All the rainfall, all the snowmelt drains to a single outlet. Researchers could measure the water quality for every square inch of that acre. They could watch for changes in the way that acre was farmed over the years. Now, multiply that acre 66,000 times. You are looking at the Big Spring Basin demonstration project. This 103-square-mile area in Clayton County is a unique, outdoor research center. It is unique in that virtually all the groundwater beneath these rolling, northeast Iowa hills discharges at a single point -- Big Spring, just north of Elkader. This allows scientists and farm management specialists to examine all the contaminants that have seeped into the groundwater on the way to the Turkey River. More importantly, the researchers are now beginning to measure changes in those contaminant levels as the people who farm, and live, in the Big Spring Basin come to realize those contaminants often end up in their drinking water.

While the Big Spring Basin is a unique drainage system, the groundwater quality problem is a common one across Iowa and the rest of the cornbelt. Corn has been king for many years and the people who grow it have learned that heavy application of agricultural chemicals often means higher yields. Studies in the 1980s, however, have shown that more and more of those chemicals are slowly percolating deep into underground aquifers that provide most Iowans with drinking water . . .

The work initiated by Big Spring is not limited to the Clayton County monitoring area. "Big Spring is perhaps the cornerstone of projects underway statewide," says [Dr. George] Hallberg [of the Department of Natural Resources' geological survey bureau]. Hundreds of Iowa farm families are taking part in the integrated farm management demonstration program -- an outgrowth of work begun in the Big Spring Basin . . . "We hope we can make significant environmental improvements," says Hallberg. "Yet find a balance between farming and the environment."

--Joe Wilkinson, information specialist

January 1989

The Compromise

■ Brushy Creek State Recreation Area in Webster County represents a unique opportunity for Iowans. Present in this 4,200-acre area are all the elements needed to create a multiple-use recreation area, while protecting Brushy's diverse natural qualities. This article tells the story of Brushy Creek -- a story that has taken nearly 30 years to unfold . . .

Land acquisition began in 1968 and was completed in 1975, totaling 4,200 acres at a cost of $2.6 million. As the Conservation Commission and the Iowa Legislature pursued acquisition of the area, they did so with the intention of constructing a major lake . . .

From the first land purchase people began to realize that the state had purchased something much more than just another lake site. Brushy's lower valley was found to contain a mosaic of natural resources that made the area worthy of protection. Exceptional scenic beauty, nationally significant archaeological sites, habitat for a state-listed threatened mammal species, highly significant geological formations and mature forests blend together to create the area known as the lower Brushy Creek valley . . .

Why has the DNR proposed development of the Brushy Creek area? Because of the economic benefits it will provide? Or because it favors the interests of those who fish, swim or boat over the interests of other recreationists? Neither is the case. The DNR has proposed lake development because that was the original intent of the project. Also, because the region that Brushy Creek State Recreation Area serves is devoid of high-quality lakes . . . Finally, the DNR has proposed the lake and associated facilities because they are compatible with multiple use of natural resources to produce multiple benefits for the citizens of Iowa. This leads to the basic difference between a recreation area and other DNR lands (such as state preserves, forests and habitat areas). Recreation area management, including that of Brushy Creek, is guided by the multiple-use philosophy, a philosophy that serves Iowa well by providing numerous popular public recreation areas and parks which, in turn, improve the overall quality of life in our state.

--Michael Carrier, administrator, Parks and Preserves Division

July 1989

The REAP Act -- A Brighter Future for Iowa's Diverse Environment

■ The Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Act passed in the 1989 session of the Iowa General Assembly, and signed by Governor Terry Branstad on May 27, is one of the premier conservation laws ever enacted in Iowa. It ranks right up there with the Groundwater Protection Act of 1987 -- the effects of both are catapulting Iowa to the front nationally in environmental and conservation initiatives . . .

In the early part of the REAP Act are some carefully chosen words which define its intentions:

"The program shall be a long-term integrated effort to wisely use and protect Iowa's natural resources through the acquisition and management of public lands; the upgrading of public park and preserve facilities; environmental education, monitoring and research; and other environmentally sound means. The resource enhancement program shall strongly encourage Iowans to develop a conservation ethic, and to make necessary changes in our activities to develop and preserve a rich and diverse natural environment."

Within the REAP Act is language which justifies its broad scope and significant funding:

"The state of Iowa has lost 99.9 percent of its prairies, 98 percent of its wetlands, 80 percent of its woodlands, 50 percent of its topsoils and more than 100 species of wildlife since settlement in the early 1800s. There has been significant deterioration in the quality of Iowa's surface waters and groundwaters. Prevention of further loss is imperative.

"The air, water, soils and biota (plant and animal life) of Iowa are interdependent and form a complex ecosystem. Iowans have the right to inherit this ecosystem in a sustainable condition, without severe or irreparable damage caused by human activities."

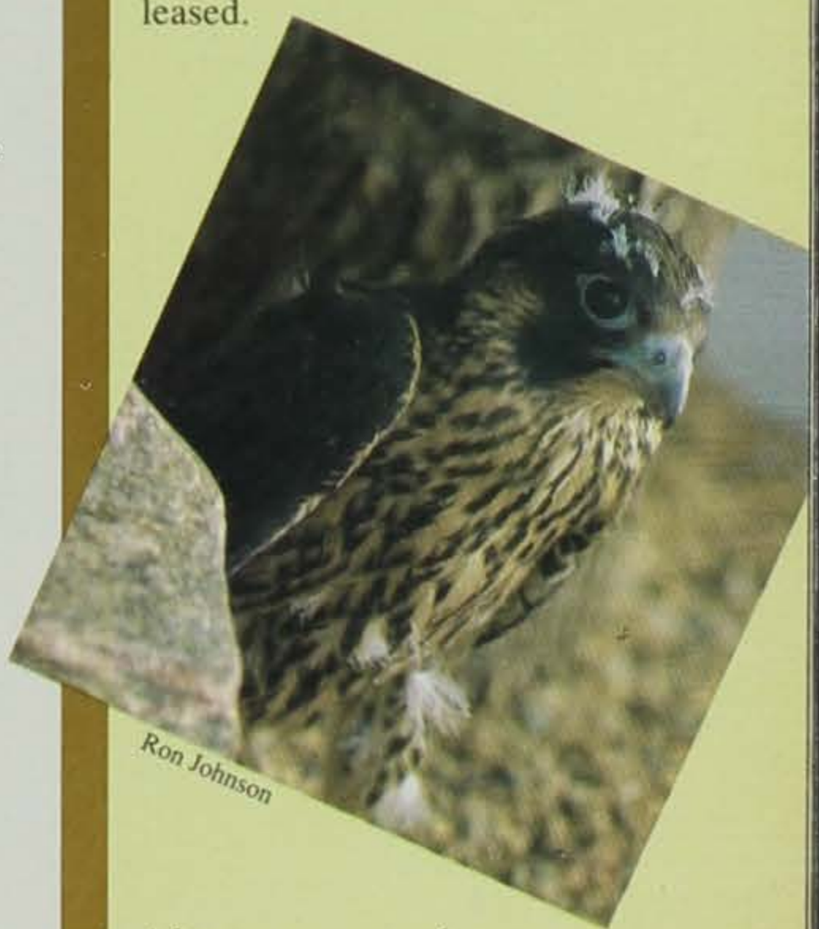
--Ross Harrison, chief, information and education bureau

said to be the first periodical in the U.S. to use coated (glossy) recycled paper which contains a significant volume of true wastepaper.

For the first time, nonresidents are allowed to hunt deer and turkey in Iowa during the fall hunting seasons.

Due to lack of support, the park user fee program is abolished.

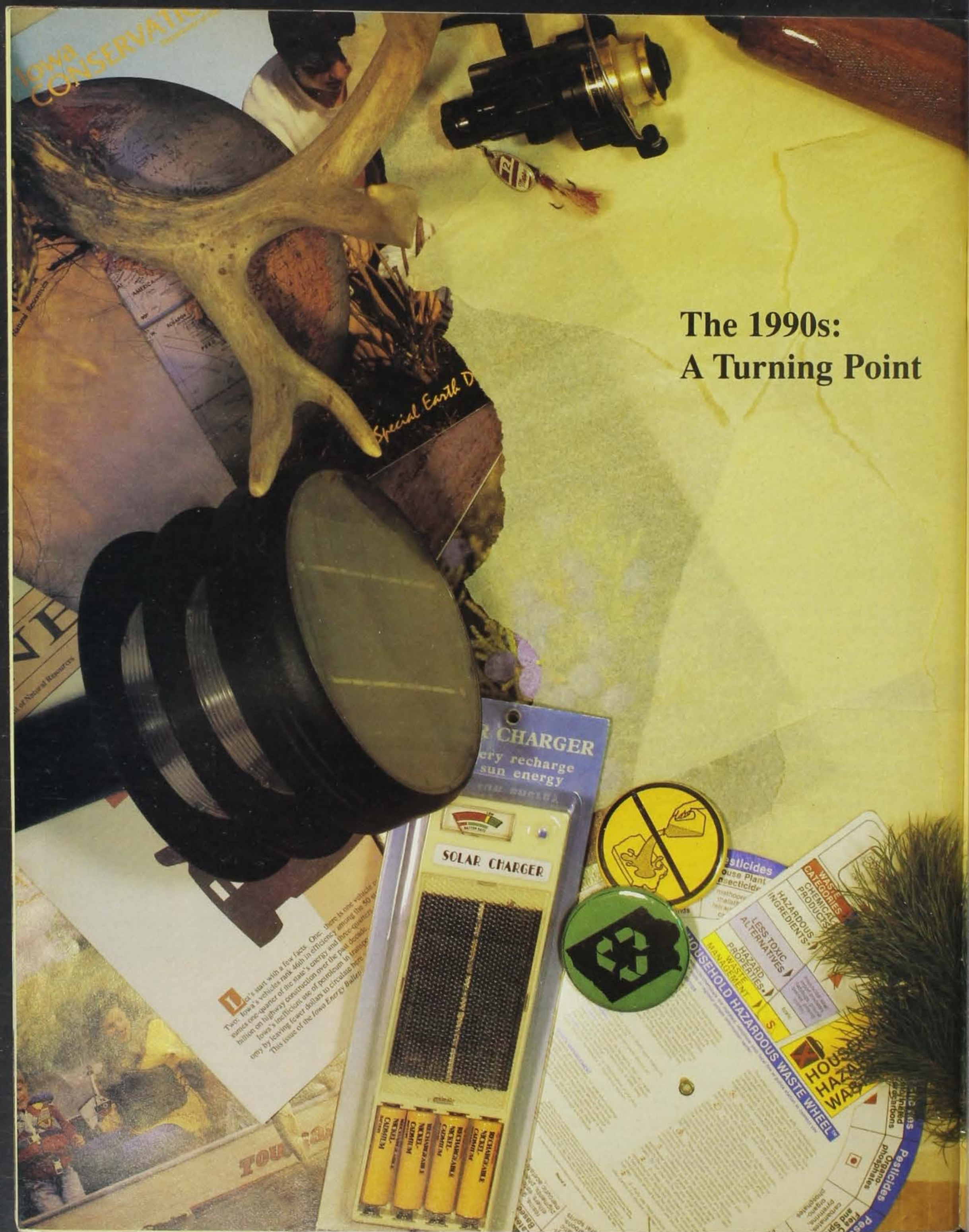
The peregrine falcon reintroduction program begins in downtown Cedar Rapids where five young falcons are released.



Ron Johnson

After two years and more than $2 million, the renovation of the Decorah Fish Hatchery is complete.

The department conducts 13 statewide public meetings as part of the "Environmental Agenda for the 90s," the Governor's initiative to develop a listing of the state's crucial environmental problems.



The 1990s: A Turning Point

April 1990

. . . Twenty years after Earth Day 1, our rivers and air are cleaner by some standards of measurement. But our oceans are not. We still use excessive amounts of fossil fuels which put too much carbon dioxide in the air, and, when mishandled, can contaminate priceless natural resources. Our mountainous landfills are quickly reaching capacity because of the conveniences of a wasteful society. While most of us do not want a factory smokestack, an oil spill or a landfill in "our backyard," we still create the demand for products that require these environmental sacrifices.

When we incorporate environmental protection values in our everyday lives, we will have arrived at a turning point for a brighter environmental future. Environmental awareness came from the first Earth Day. Environmental action should be the result of this one. Join us in the 1990s as we each strive to change our lifestyles in favor of the Earth.

■ 1990

J. N. "Ding" Darling license available. It covers fishing, hunting and trapping (for fur harvesters 16 and over), plus the state stamps for waterfowl, habitat and trout.

The Civilian Conservation Corps Museum opens at Backbone State Park.

The first round of REAP assemblies are conducted in February and March. Delegates are elected to participate in the first REAP congress, which is held in the senate chambers in July.

The Iowa Tomorrow Card is now available. A percentage of credit charges goes directly into the REAP account.

Yard waste can no longer be disposed of in landfills according to a new law which goes into effect January 1.

A toxic cleanup day held in Polk County is one of the largest first-time cleanup days ever conducted in the U.S. Polk County residents bring in nearly 500 drums worth of hazardous waste along with 4,900 gallons of oil, 600 gallons of usable paint and 812 car batteries.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August triggers increased oil prices. DNR officials encourage transportation efficiency to help reduce fuel prices.

April 1990

Earth Day's 20th Anniversary

An Editorial

■ Twenty years ago, the first Earth Day heightened the awareness of most Americans that our lifestyle was having a major impact on the Earth. Who among us old enough to recall could ever forget the TV ad of the Native American viewing his polluted environment?

Today, the world is undergoing dramatic social change as evidenced in eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Central America and South Africa. Promises of new freedoms and democracy abound. As I witness these events, it strikes me that within these nations, there is also a developing environmental protection movement. People are recognizing that freedom will not mean as much if it occurs in a polluted and unhealthy environment.

Can we say we placed the same value on environmental quality in the United States? Even though we have spent billions cleaning up some of our past mistakes? Too many of us still have not made environmental quality a significant part of our everyday lives.

Twenty years after Earth Day 1, our rivers and air are cleaner by some standards of measurement. But our oceans are not. We still use excessive amounts of fossil fuels which put too much carbon dioxide in the air, and, when mishandled, can contaminate priceless natural resources. Our mountainous landfills are quickly reaching capacity because of the conveniences of a wasteful society. While most of us do not want a factory smokestack, an oil spill or a landfill in "our backyard," we still create the demand for products that require these environmental sacrifices.

When we incorporate environmental protection values in our everyday lives, we will have arrived at a turning point for a brighter environmental future. Environmental awareness came from the first Earth Day. Environmental action should be the result of this one. Join us in the 1990s as we each strive to change our lifestyles in favor of the Earth.

--Larry J. Wilson, director, Department of Natural Resources

June 1990

They're Back

■ It was a still, frosty March morning as I stepped out of my car along a county road in southern Ringgold County. The air was filled with the sounds of booming, clucking and squawking as nine cock prairie chickens squabbled over choice portions of a nearby ridge that made up their booming or display ground. The noise level increased as two hens flew in from the west and landed on the periphery of the ground. Before morning was over, I would see a total of 21 prairie chickens including one more on another ground in Iowa and nine on a booming ground in nearby Harrison County, Missouri.

The sights and sounds I was witnessing that morning are the results of an ongoing program started in 1987 to reintroduce prairie chickens in southern Iowa. Originally the most abundant game bird in Iowa, prairie chickens disappeard from the state about 30 years ago. This program is an attempt to restore these natives in an area of Iowa that is still more than 60 percent grassland.

During the springs of 1987, 1988 and 1989, a total of 253 prairie chickens were stocked on the Ringgold Wildlife Area, just north of the Missouri border, in Ringgold County. Birds used in this stocking were wild birds from Kansas obtained in a three-way trade in which Iowa sent turkeys and pheasants to Michigan and Michigan in turn supplied Kansas with greese in exchange for the prairie chickens . . .

So far the results look promising.

. . . Iowa again has prairie chickens and the Department of Natural Resources, through its management programs, intends to insure they do not disappear again.

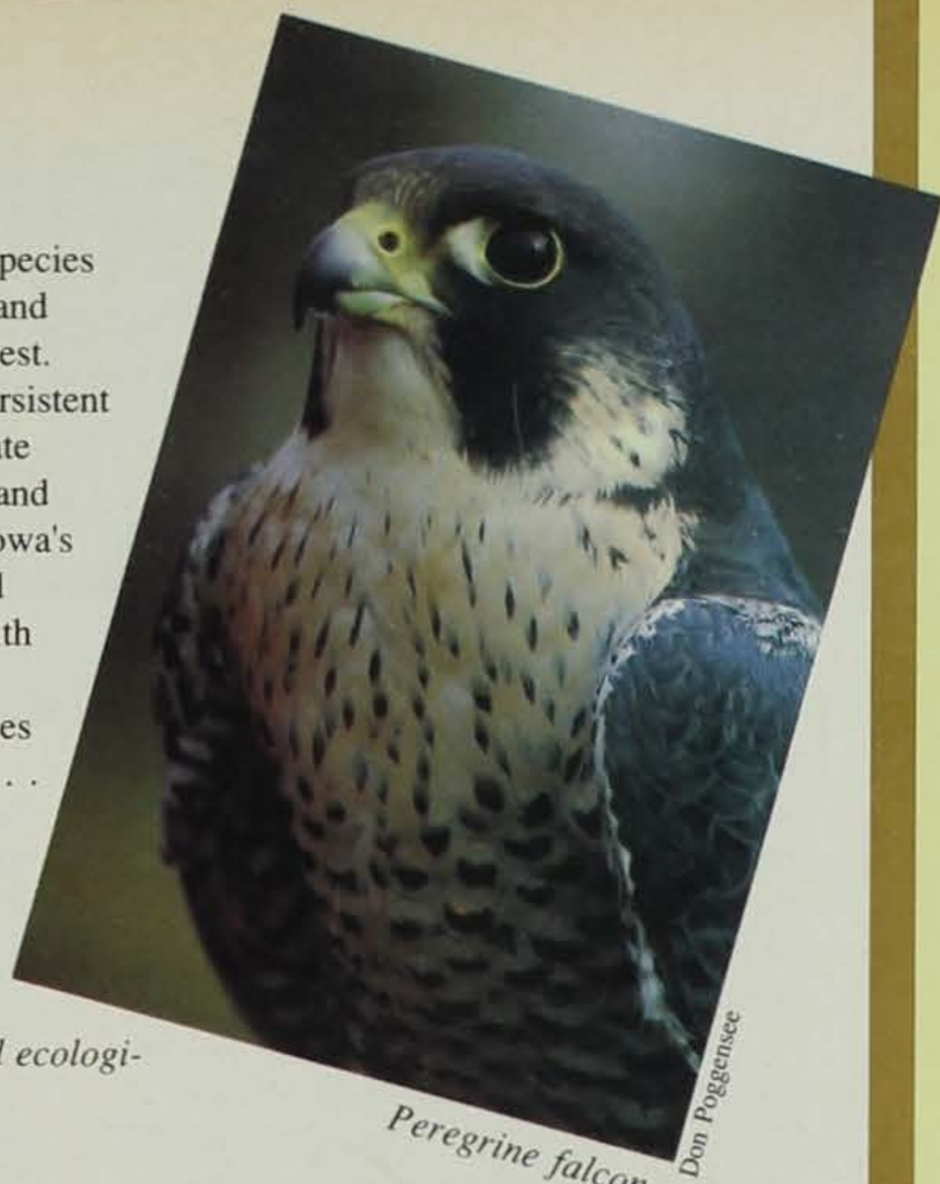
--Mel Moe, management biologist

June 1990

Recovery 2000

■ At one time, it was common to find species such as the peregrine falcon, bald eagle and prairie bush clover throughout the Midwest. But, because of loss of habitat, use of persistent pesticides such as DDT and indiscriminate killing, such species became threatened and endangered. Thanks to such efforts as Iowa's Nongame Program and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's cost-share program with the states, progress has been made to recover threatened and endangered species . . . [T]he new Recovery 2000 program . . . will expand existing efforts and greatly improve the chance to again enjoy several species presently listed as threatened or endangered on the national level . . .

--Daryl Howell, chief, preserves and ecological services bureau



Peregrine falcon. Don Poggensee

March 1990

The Aquatic Education Program -- Fish Iowa!

■ What is *aquatic education*? Generally speaking, it is an effort to promote public awareness and understanding of water resource-related issues. The quality and longevity of Iowa's waters are largely dependent on land usage and conservation practices of individuals. The goal of the "Fish Iowa!" aquatic education program is to impart knowledge about the components of the aquatic ecosystem to our citizens so they realize the relationships between various user practices and the problems facing our resources. More specifically, our aquatic education program involves projects and efforts around the state including displays, information materials, fishing clinics and school programs . . .

--Barbara D. Gigar, aquatic education coordinator

July 1991

More For Your Money

■ Picture the home of your dreams -- 2,500-square-foot contemporary with vaulted ceilings, open floor plan. Or maybe it's a large two-story colonial. Now imagine receiving your first heating bill. Does the picture fade? It doesn't have to. If you can afford a house, you can afford an energy efficient house.

An energy efficient mortgage can help you buy the home of your dreams as well as make it an affordable dream . . .

An energy efficient mortgage allows lenders to stretch the qualifying "debt-to-income ratios" for purchasers of energy efficient homes. What is a debt-to-income ratio? Lenders use this ratio to compare your gross monthly income to your monthly housing costs. Monthly housing costs include your principal, interest, taxes and insurance. The assumption is that any energy efficient home will have lower heating and cooling costs. This allows a buyer to dedicate a larger percentage of their income to paying their monthly mortgage . . .

Previously, energy efficiency was based on past energy consumption, which was highly dependent on the size of the home and the occupant's lifestyle. Lenders will soon have an objective method of determining qualifications for an energy efficient mortgage. This new rating system is scheduled to begin on July 1, 1992, for new home construction and July 1, 1993, for existing homes . . .

Don't let a higher cost for an energy efficient home scare you away. Two homes may look the same, but only one may be your affordable dream.

--Randy Martin, program planner

The Waste Reduction Assistance Program gets underway. Under WRAP, Iowa businesses learn ways to reduce the amount of waste they send to the landfills.

After 20 years of anticipation, the promise of solar technology becomes a reality as solar appliances embark on consumer markets.

The 15 most important environmental issues in Iowa are submitted to Governor Branstad to help develop his "Envrionmental Agenda for the 1990s." They are: hazardous waste generation, household hazardous waste, recycling and recycling markets for solid waste, package reduction and recycling, hazardous waste management facility, soil conservation, management of pesticide and fertilizer use, groundwater quality, air quality, energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, environmental education, open spaces protection funding, environmental health effects and information, environmental responsibility, and environmental protection funding.

Iowa hunters harvest a record number of wild turkeys during the spring season. Wild turkey gun harvest is estimated at 8,117 bearded birds, up 21 percent from 1989. Archery harvest also increased 21 percent with 117 turkeys taken. And, this is the first year for non-resident spring turkey hunting. A total of 74 bearded turkeys are taken by non-residents.

A wild game cookoff, with conservation officers serving as judges, is held at the Iowa State Fair.

■ 1991

The *Iowa Conservationist* is now printed with soy ink, which is water-soluable and is made using Iowa soybeans.

The nongame program celebrates its 10th anniversary. To date, more than $1.4 million has been donated to the program.

A motorcycle can now be registered as an ATV.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources' law enforcement officers celebrate 100 years of conservation law enforcement in the state.

Recycled grocery bags become commonplace in Iowa supermarkets.

In less than 25 years, Eastern wild turkeys in Iowa increased from non-existent to a thriving, bountiful population. Based on spring harvest values, previous research and some basic biological assumptions, there are now between 75,000 and 100,000 wild turkeys in Iowa. The restoration of the wild turkey in Iowa is now complete!
--The Final Chapter -- Restoring the Wild Turkey in Iowa, *by DeWaine Jackson, wildlife biologist, April 1991*

April 1991

Asset or Liability? Benefits of Wetlands


Lowell Washburn

■ The atmosphere inside the county courthouse was heating up as public debate fastened on the question of whether or not the county conservation board should be allowed to purchase a local wetland.

The tightly packed room was clearly divided into two distinct camps -- those who vigorously and vocally supported the acquisition, and those who just as vigorously and vocally thought the notion of paying good money to preserve a "hunk of swamp ground" was simply inconceivable.

The final outcome of this meeting, as well as the eventual fate of the wetland, would be determined by the three-member county board of supervisors. Early on it became painfully evident that at least one or two of these board members did not care too much for "swamps" themselves. At one point, one of these frustrated officials threw up his arms and cried, "I do not see what all the fuss is about. Why, that ground cannot even grow corn." As I recall, that comment drew both cheers and jeers, and although things did not seem to be going too well at that point the story did have a happy ending. That wetland ultimately became one of the first successful acquisitions under Iowa's new habitat stamp program.

But in many regards that stormy public meeting was by no means unique. And in spite of today's heightened public awareness toward environmental issues, the question lingers. What are wetlands really worth?

. . . one of the greatest benefits attached to Iowa wetlands is their profound ability to improve water quality . . . First, as polluted, sediment-laden water enters the wetland basin it immediately begins to lose velocity. And as gravity has its effect, suspended solids begin to settle to the marsh bottom . . .

Perhaps the most intangible of all wetland values is its aesthetic appeal. Aesthetics can never be measured in terms of dollars, percentages or pounds per acre. Yet for those of us who cherish wetlands, this is perhaps the greatest value of all.

Today we strive to maintain wetlands because they are good for wildlife and good for the environment. But perhaps one day we will learn to save them simply because they are good for the human spirit.

--Lowell Washburn, information specialist

June 1991

Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Mobility

■ Life, liberty and the pursuit of mobility -- these are what Americans hold most dear. In terms of mobility, post World War II highway building accelerated the automobile-centered mentality we have come to enjoy and in fact, expect. This expectation has been self-fulfilling in our "drive up" culture. We drive up to banks, restaurants and even churches. We can do everything in our cars . . .

The cost of owning and operating a vehicle goes far beyond purchase price, maintenance, the dollars spent on our highway systems and the energy dependency created by indiscriminate use of vehicles. The public is now learning the automobile is damaging an environment we assumed would last forever in a "safe" state. It is negatively affecting the air we breathe, the water we drink and our natural life support system. Despite Americans' love affair with the automobile, we now have to realize it may not always be good for us . . .

Iowa can overhaul its transportation policies to be consistent with its commitment to increasing energy efficiency and the environmental quality of the state. We must emphasize quality of life before mobility.

--Ward Lenz, administrative intern, and Sharon A. Tahtinen, transportation and planning supervisor

May 1991

Getting to the Point

■ Iowa has been blessed with rich, black soil that is the envy of the world. With intensive management, and the right weather conditions, these soils produce an abundance of crops. But with this abundance comes a price, because Iowa's surface waters are contaminated with the very resources that make the state so productive. Sediment, fertilizers and pesticides are finding their way into the water . . .

This type of impact on water quality from agriculture is called nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. NPS pollution occurs when rainfall or snowmelt runoff carries contaminants from large land areas, such as farm fields, into surface or ground waters. In Iowa, efforts to control NPS pollution have focused on agricultural sources, because these sources are having the greatest impact on Iowa's water quality. For example, a 1990 study by the DNR found that of the 83 significant publicly owned lakes in Iowa affected by NPS pollution, agriculture was the major source of impact on lakes. Sediment from eroding farm fields was the major pollutant with plant nutrients a close second.

The problems associated with NPS pollution are many and varied. Sediment fills lakes, streams, rivers and reservoirs, smothers fish larvae and eggs, and increases drinking water treatment costs. Excessive nitrogen and phosphorus (plant nutrients) in a water body can cause an over-abundance of aquatic plant life and algae blooms. When these plant materials decompose, oxygen is consumed, lowering dissolved oxygen levels in the water to the point where fish kills occur. Pesticides, including herbicides, insecticides and fungicides, can wash off crops and fields and enter lakes and other surface waters. There they may affect fish and other aquatic life, and water high in nitrates may be toxic to infants.

One way to illustrate the problems caused by NPS pollution and the practices which can be used to control them is to look at West Lake, located west of Osceola in Clarke County . . .

. . . the lake is the source of drinking water for the town of Osceola. As a result, pollutants in the water have many people concerned . . .

Most of the water quality problems of West Lake are attributed to the sediment, nutrients and pesticides which wash from its agricultural watershed . . .

To reduce the water quality problems of West Lake, the Clarke County Soil and Water Conservation District has now received funding to carry out a comprehensive lake protection project . . .

Under this project, farmers will be able to select the practice or practices that fit their farming operation, as well as their pocketbooks. These practices are called "best management practices," or BMPs. They are effective, practical means of preventing or reducing nonpoint pollution . . .

--Ubbo Agena, environmental engineer, and Tom Oswald, Soil Conservation

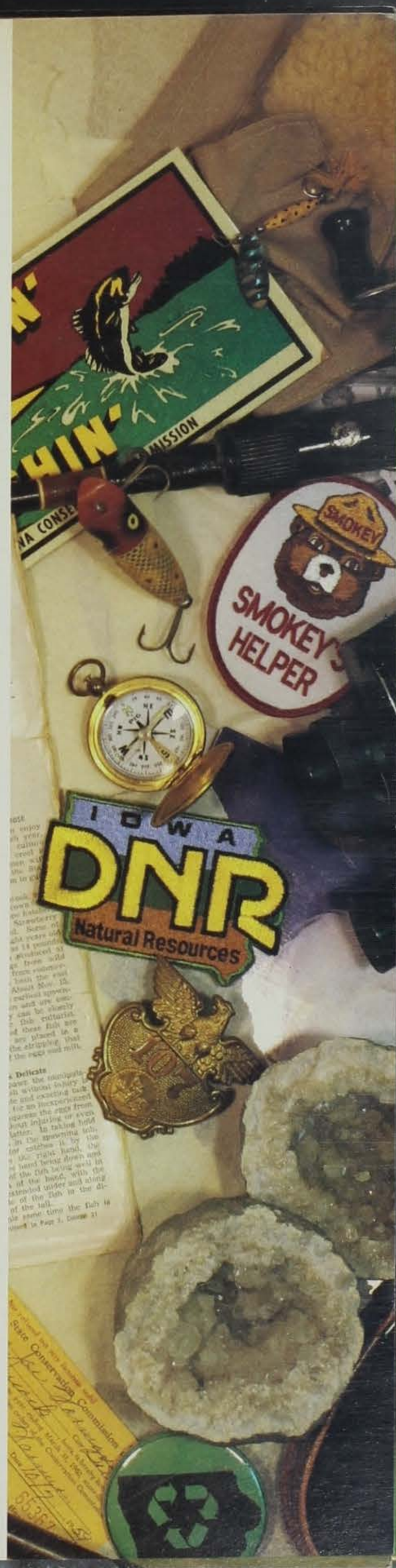
July 1991

Summer Mushrooms, Some are Not

■ By late May, most Iowans who hunt morel mushrooms have put away their collecting baskets until next spring. They may have some morels stored away in a freezer, but most hunters wish that the season lasted much longer. The Iowa morel season, beginning around April 15 and ending four or five weeks later, seems very short. However, there are some people who do not stop mushrooming when the morel season ends. They may not say much about it, but they continue to take walks in the woods and harvest other edible fungi from June into October or even November . . .

For those who want to expand their edible wild mushroom collecting season, there is good news and bad news. The good news is that edible fungi do occur throughout the growing season. Many of them have their own limited season, but some can occur for months with the appropriate growing conditions. The bad news is that collectors must learn to recognize the common edible mushrooms and limit collection to those . . .

--Lois H. Tiffany, chairperson, botany department, Iowa State University, and George Knaphus, professor, botany department




ETA CAVES STATE PA
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FOR HUNTING—TRA
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HAZARDOUS
WASTE WHEEL
Pesticides
Herbicides
Paints
Enamel or Oil Based Paints
Paints
Latex or Water Based Paints
WINCHESTER
Super Steel
SHOTGUN SHELLS
EARTH DAY
Creek Pa